YOUTH DEVELOPMENT POLICY

What American

Foundations Can Do

to Promote Policy

in Support of

the Emerging Field

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A Policy Landscape Report for the

Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

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Forward and Acknowledgements

This was a dream assignment. Imagine thinking about, writing about, advocating about and worrying about American youth policy for much of your career and then receiving a phone call from a philanthropy inviting you to pull your thoughts, hopes and worries together in a "scan" of the policy landscape with implications for grantmakers. This is precisely what happened when Barbara Haar, senior program officer, Youth Development division of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, and Damian Thorman, director of Public Affairs for the Kauffman Foundation, solicited our interest in producing the report shared in this document.

The report was commissioned by the Kauffman Foundation to inform its own work in youth development and share with others in this field. While the Kauffman Foundation's investments in youth development have focused heavily on the Greater Kansas City metropolitan area in support of programs and intermediaries, the foundation also is among a group of national funders that have been conversing about the opportunities to advance the field of youth development and help this field gain a foothold in policy discussions.

A challenge with writing about youth policy is that it is always changing. In our case, we started writing this report when the Younger Americans Act was only emerging as a serious legislative prospect. As this report is prepared for publication at the end of 2001, it is still not law. The debate in Congress seemed to be approaching a level of seriousness but the events of September 11 in our nation derailed the discussions, at least for this moment in time. In this report, we also focused on the reauthorization of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLCs), and we described some of the policy debates such as whether community groups should be allowed to compete for funds. This part of the policy landscape is closer to law as a new education bill may finally have achieved consensus in Congress just as this Forward is written. Now community groups are proposed to be allowed to compete for funds, as recommended in this paper.

With almost any place or organization we describe in the paper, there are bound to be developments. The Children's Defense Fund introduced its comprehensive bill in Congress, "Leave No Child Behind," since we started this project. The U.S. Department of Agriculture decided to support America's largest and oldest youth program, the 4-H, to conduct a series of "conversations" on youth development, including policy concerns, in many counties. The much-respected think tanks and policy research organizations Public/Private Ventures and Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation recently published "Challenges and Opportunities in After-School Programs: Lessons for Policymakers and Funders," a report that adds new information about various state initiatives in the 1998-current period. The National Research Council's Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth is nearly ready to release a major review of the community-based youth development field and policy implications.

Even with the dynamic nature of the policy world, consider that it might not add up to much from the standard of fairness, equity and, yes, affordability. Youth development as described in this paper does not present a very serious policy effort when the surface is scratched. It is decentralized to a fault; it is anemic in policy resource terms; and some have observed that it is inbred in its jargon and debates.

Taking a positive view, states are increasingly examining whether it makes sense to have a true youth development policy. This is good news. States are searching for the best entry points and strategies as suggested in this report. For example, they are asking if state policy should be sold as learning in the non-school hours, the soft side of juvenile justice, an extension of early childhood, youth development, community youth development, family development, prevention, or some other entry point. These inquiries are healthy and may pay dividends.

A final thank you to my colleague, Dr. Susan Lanspery, who led in every way much of this project, as well as my gratitude to other members of the team and consultants.

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December 2001
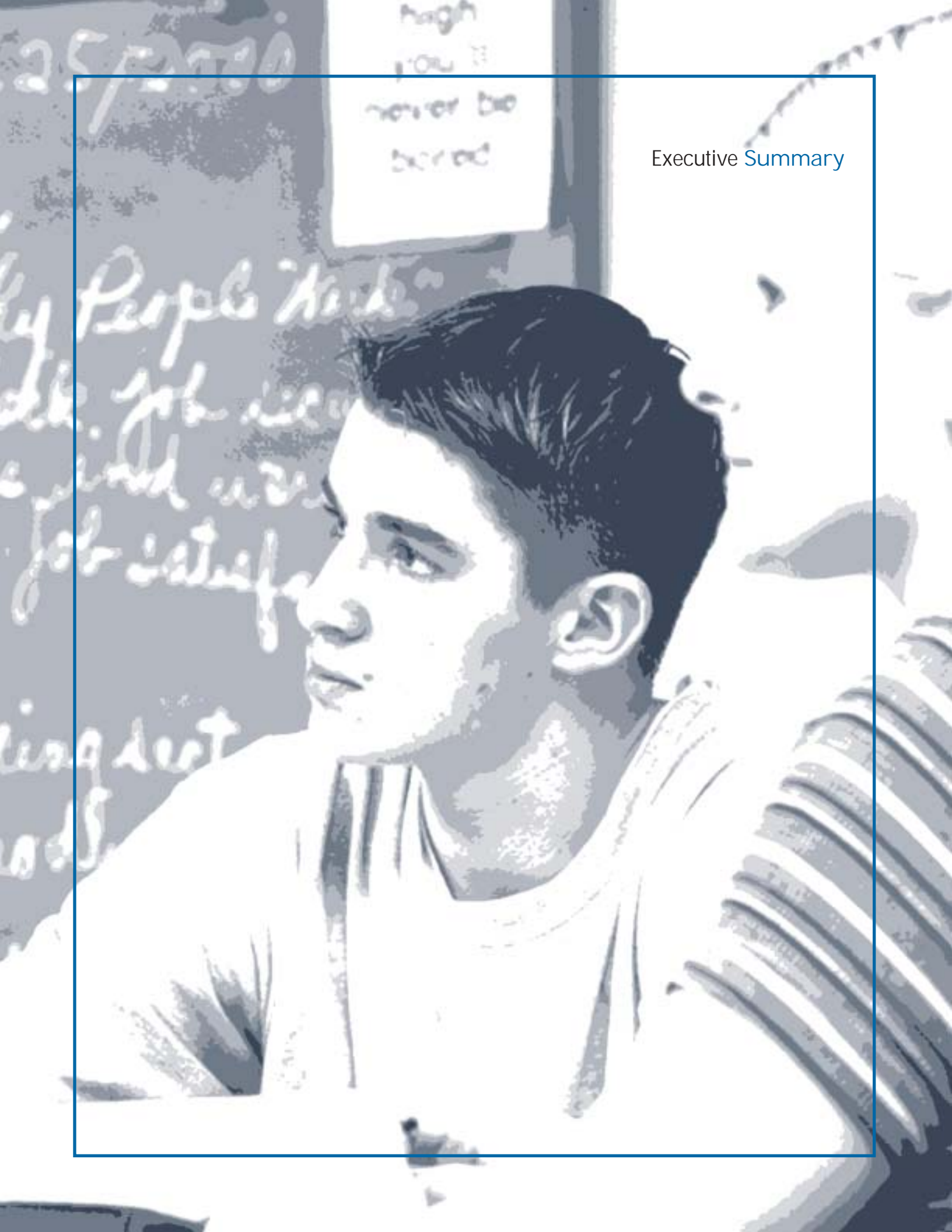
Executive **Summary**

Youth development is an emerging, vital field that pays inadequate attention to the social policies shaping the programs and strategies that in turn enliven the field. Few state, local or federal youth-focused, policy-oriented groups exist; the magnitude of state and federal policies is limited; and most foundation grant making concentrates on service providers, programs, and other investment areas rather than on the policy environment.

Why is this the case? Policy is likely the last evolutionary phase in the professional maturing of the youth development field. The field is still concerned with baseline needs.

- It struggles to find an *intellectual niche* with its own body of research.

- It is still trying to *define the parameters of the field* (for example, the ages and characteristics of "youth").

- The field has a body of *program evaluation* that makes it possible to compile "best practices" and "effective practices," although not enough rigorous studies that test the comprehensive youth development practices recommended by advocates and theorists.

- Finally, *accreditation and licensing* and *in-service* and *graduate degree* education are still in an early stage of development.

The complete paper, prepared by Brandeis University's Institute for Sustainable Development/Center for Youth and Communities, describes the state of American youth development policy, identifies policy-related opportunities for grant makers, looks particularly at youth development policy in Kansas and Missouri, and compares youth development to other fields that have been more successful in policy terms.

Using What We Know About Youth Development to Structure Appropriate Policies

Youth development is an elastic and multi-dimensional construct that embraces a process of human growth, a philosophical orientation to social development and community, and a programmatic framework for youth services. Perhaps because of this complexity, a great deal of the work in youth development has been purely "definitional."

> **RECOMMENDATION:** We recommend a moratorium on further efforts to define youth development and encourage using the existing literature and information to influence policy development and reform, curricula, executive education and program design.

The essence of youth *development* is that youth have different assets and needs at different ages. Youth development policy should not treat 10- to 12-year-olds the same as 12- to 15-year-olds, 16- to 18-year-olds, or 19- to 24-year-olds. This creates an important opportunity:

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Grant makers should use their resources to help the field think in more "age-specific" terms within the youth span and embed age-appropriate practices in policies and regulations.

Major recent reports have described youth development as an approach that focuses on assets and competencies rather than on the deficits emphasized by traditional youth treatment or prevention programs. Many nonprofit youth programs have used a positive development model for decades. Social policies that support moving from a "deficit" to an "asset" perspective are needed. Along with an assets approach, however, comes the rhetoric of serving "all" youth, or even all youth in need. The big policy battle is who will be served when there's not enough money to go around. The field lacks debate over real policy alternatives. The paper presents new data showing the necessity of making tough choices in the funding and coverage of youth development policies, applying national examples (such as the proposed Younger Americans Act and 21st Century Learning Centers) and looking at youth development budgets in Kansas and Missouri.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** We recommend that foundations focus on how an assets approach affects who will get new and existing resources.

At the same time, youth programs cannot be expected to deliver multiple, friendly, customer-oriented, age-appropriate, and long-term services that meet the cognitive, social, physical, emotional and moral development needs of youth without funding that supports that level of operations.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Funders must recognize that agencies need longer term funding that will permit long-term services to youth and support infrastructure, operations, professional development and other components that contribute to better outcomes.

Many foundations support media outlets such as *Youth Today* and the new *Community Youth Development Journal,* and media campaigns are under way to shift thinking about youth development and the positive youth outcomes it can produce. Ford, Kellogg and the Kauffman Foundation are among those supporting new communications tools that contribute to the youth development discussion.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Grant makers should help to *inject ideas and information about youth policy into these communications activities* through add-on projects and work with intermediaries, networks and media outlets.

With all these challenges, there is strong justification to support the creation of entirely new policy-oriented groups in some places.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundation strategy might focus on creating new youth policy institutions along with making youth policy a stronger focus in existing policy shops.

Finally, better policy information about local policy bottlenecks is needed to support these strategies. Attention to *"micro-policy"* or *the impact of regulations* is an essential component of policy reform. Scans of the role of regulations are haphazard and generally reactive to an emergency event.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Grant makers should support systematic assessment of the role and impact of health, safety, building and zoning regulations.

What Do We Know About
Federal and State Youth Development Policy?

Two key federal-level challenges are the modest magnitude of programs — which typically serve less than 12 percent of eligible youth — and the lack of developmental principles in policies. Other illustrative federal policy themes include:

- Confusion on who should dominate the field (e.g., schools, child development, criminal justice, second-chance programs, or the eclectic after-school movement)

- Linkages between youth development and community development

- The roles of the large youth-serving agencies and the small community, faith and grassroots organizations

- The enduring legacy of policy silos

- The critical policy challenges of finance, affordability and equity

- Scale of initiatives relative to the need

- Practitioner demands for flexibility vis-à-vis the accountability and outcomes movement

- The choice between "Trojan Horse" legislative strategies that embed youth development principles in other approaches, and an "omnibus" approach.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Grant makers should assist advocates in understanding the *dynamic challenges in the youth development policy field.* Grant making in support of *deep policy analysis* is also needed.

The full landscape report presents five generalizations about state youth development policy:

1. Youth development policy is young, underdeveloped and inconsistent across states.

2. The size of state policy development grants is small compared with the states' lofty goals of universal systems that will also (somehow) target groups at risk. A few states are beginning to allocate funds to after-school programs, but the number is small.

3. Many state policy activities are in information, training and collaboration. Far less support is available for program services, and even less for comprehensive and long-term youth development programs.

4. One cited study indicates that the bulk of federal and state policy runs against the youth development paradigm. A rise in categorical public funding has forced agencies formerly oriented to youth development to cater to specialized groups. The result is fewer overall programs, fewer youth development programs and smaller enrollments.

5. Few sources of information exist on state policy initiatives. Those that move beyond the descriptive with an analytical and critical eye to adequacy, cost and other issues are especially rare. State-level policy evaluation is weak, and support of regional watchdog organizations has not often led to a voice in state or urban youth development policy-making.

Needed: Proactive Youth Development Policies That Will Build a Field

The youth development field faces several challenges on its way to becoming a profession. Foundations can help to build the field through work in licensing and credentials; in-service training; accreditation; developing new managers and workers; basic operations training; practitioner associations; and marketing and communications campaigns.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that grant makers focus on *licensing and credentials* in partnership with state policy makers, agencies and regulators.

RECOMMENDATION: Funders should promote the *policy support needed to design and carry out in-service training programs* that are accessible in communities where youth workers are employed, consistent with the values of those being trained, focused on youth development core competencies, and accompanied by follow-up and technical assistance.

RECOMMENDATION: Funders should support policy that builds a state-by-state *system of accreditation* for youth development training. YouthNet, a Kansas City, Mo., youth development intermediary organization, is a leader in this regard with its Standards Development Team.

RECOMMENDATION: Foundations should explore partnerships with higher education that can train the much-needed next generation of *youth development managers and direct service workers* and help develop new public policies to support these goals.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant makers should support activities and policy making that addresses critical *basic training in financial controls, organization development, human resources, planning and development* to improve programs' chances of affecting youth outcomes. The more grassroots the youth-serving organization, the more severe are the operational challenges.

RECOMMENDATION: To build the professional capacity of the field, foundations should support (and *infuse policy skills and content into*) the development of an "*umbrella*" *association of practitioners, affinity groups, organizational renewal projects, information networks and clearinghouses, and peer-to-peer networks.*

RECOMMENDATION: Foundations should promote marketing and communications campaigns to generate interest among young people in youth work careers.

National Lessons Hold True in Kansas and Missouri

The regional findings addressed in the full landscape study include:

- Changes in youth development policy in the region have been mostly in language.

- The field is undercapitalized.

- Deeper policy issues are not addressed adequately.

- Ideas about "universal" youth development opportunities are too general.

- Regional uncertainty exists about whether youth development is a program reform movement through a new set of principles, a school reform effort, an add-on to early childhood and day care, or something else. Some local people seek to learn from the allied field of child development as a guide to youth development's future evolution; others want to graft youth development on to early childhood and family support.

- Policy connections between youth and community development are not adequately established.

- The work of national policy intermediaries is unfamiliar in the region.

Yet there is *optimism* that the various pieces of the system can be re-conceptualized into an effective system, and there is *respect* for groups such as YouthNet, which is approaching standards as a way to weave together a system.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Looking at Kansas and Missouri, the report calls for funders to support:

- Deeper analysis of the place of youth development in the states' children, family, youth and community policies.

- Assisting local intermediaries and community groups to "do" policy work and find mechanisms to bring their voices to the policy table.

- Critical voices to advocate for youth policies based on careful analysis with a fair but tough edge.

- Policies that strengthen the youth development/parent connection.

- Regional policymakers dealing with new challenges such as the mobility of youth in and out of the region.

- Moving successful local initiatives to scale through policy support.

- Helping policymakers develop their own competencies to build needed replication and sustainability plans into policy.

- Public/private partnerships that add flexibility and opportunity through blended funding streams.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant makers should take on "micro-policy" roles such as identifying facility funding resources; supporting technical assistance concerning regulations; promoting training on licensure, facilities, standards, and health; supporting more user-friendly municipal-level processes; and supporting efforts to eliminate regulatory barriers.

A **National Scan** of the

Youth Development

Policy Landscape
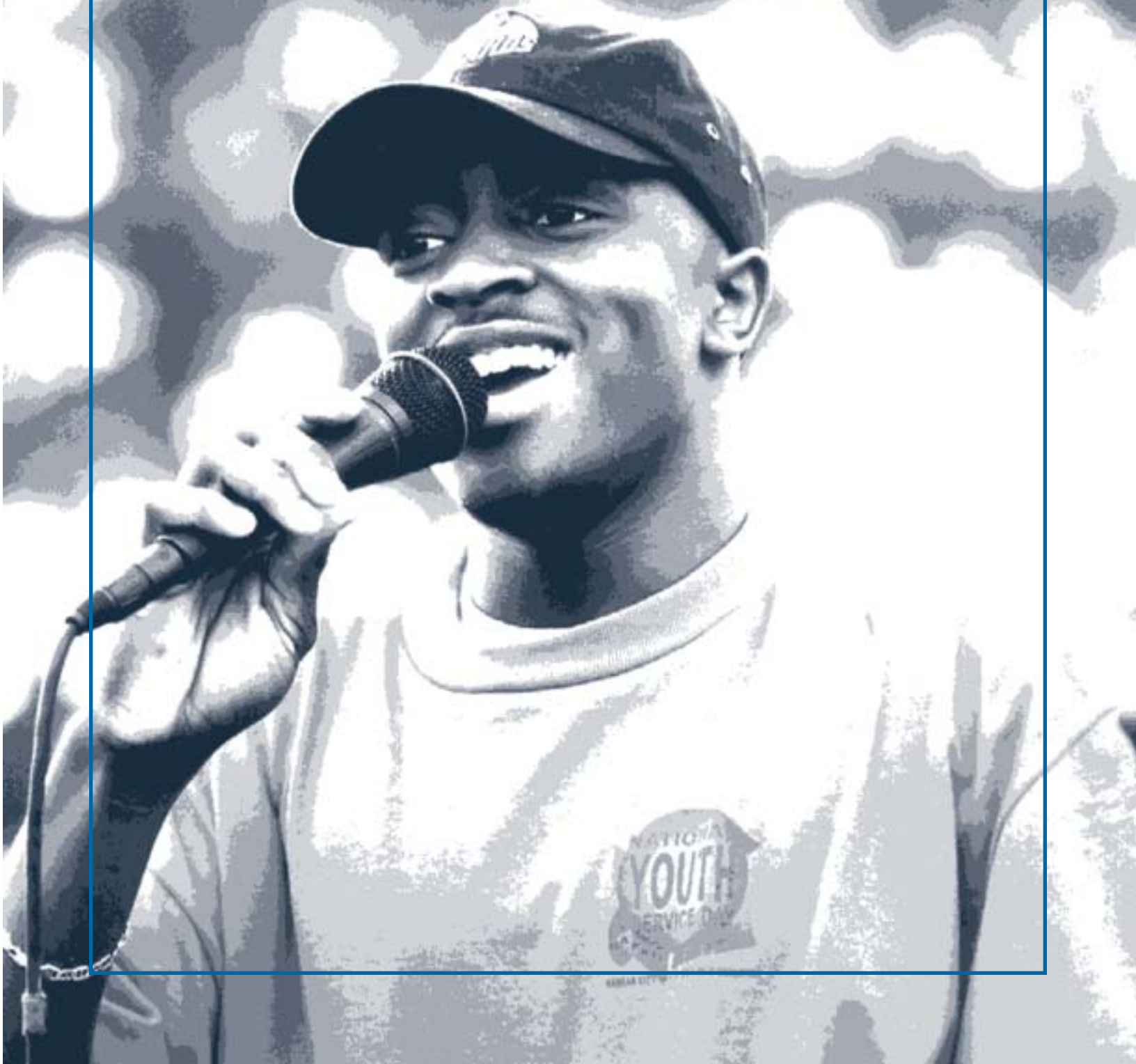
Introduction

Youth development is an emerging, vital field that pays inadequate attention to the social policies shaping the programs and strategies that in turn enliven the field. Few youth-focused, policy-oriented groups exist at the state, local, or federal level; the magnitude of state and federal policies is limited; and most foundation grant making concentrates on service providers, programs and other worthy investment areas rather than on the policy environment.

We think we know why.

Policy is likely the last evolutionary phase in the professional maturing of the youth development field. The field currently has its hands full with baseline matters. It is struggling to find an *intellectual niche* with its own coherent body of underlying research justifying action interventions. It is still trying to achieve *conceptual clarity* over the precise parameters of the field. For example, debate persists over the ages and characteristics of the youth whom it might serve. The field has a body of *program evaluation* that makes it possible to compile "best practices" and "effective practices" reports — certainly an important marker of professional standing — but not enough rigorous studies that test the comprehensive youth development practices recommended by advocates and theorists. Finally, *accreditation and licensing as well as in-service and graduate degree education* are still in an early stage of development.

With so much on the plate, no wonder policy hasn't been a major focus. Yet perhaps the time has come to dig deeper and think more about it.

This paper focuses on the policy environment that gives meaning — through policy-directed financial resources, regulations, and new designs — to the youth development field. It describes the anemic and residual nature of American youth development policy, and compares it to other fields we regard as more mature or successful in policy terms, such as early childhood education, healthcare and aging. We focus on federal as well as state policy, using Kansas and Missouri as examples. We review the field and identify policy-related opportunities for grant makers to nurture the policy side of the field in ways that are well within the bounds of appropriate behavior for private foundations.[1]

Overview of the Report

The paper is divided into two major parts. Part 1 reports on our *national* scan of the youth policy development landscape, including our recommendations (in gray shading) to foundations for policy strategies. It begins with a review of foundation grant making strategies in the policy realm, then turns to the youth development field, youth development definitions and principles, state policy, youth development programs, what's needed to make youth development work a profession, and more in-depth national policy discussion.

In Part 2, we test Part 1's findings through interviews and reviewing materials from Kansas and Missouri. The bibliography includes cited references as well as selected other materials of interest.

Limitations

This project is an informed review and synthesis, building on related projects and the authors' experiences. It is not intended to be all-inclusive. We interviewed a number of people, but not enough to capture the full diversity of practices and policies in the field. We also reviewed a hefty literature — and found it very helpful — but even so this project wasn't a data-sifting exercise. Finally, many of our ideas need further research, testing, and elaboration.

In addition, some youth development specialists will take exception to specific recommendations or note omissions. For example, we may neglect favorite or especially successful programs or strategies, or rich examples of people and organizations already doing things or calling for policy innovations that we also recommend. The most dramatic example of the latter is the Younger Americans Act legislative proposal (www.nydic.org) introduced into the 107th Congress. The Act incorporates some of the policy reform principles we touch upon in this report. Its passage would surely be an historic marker in the maturing of the youth development policy field.

With these limitations in mind, we intend our thoughts and recommendations to be a beginning rather than an end. Our goal is to start a dialogue, provide a policy framework, and present enough information to surface promising choices for grant makers, policymakers and others to pursue.

Generic Strategies
for Shaping Public Policy:
The Role of Grant Makers

Youth development funding has historically tilted toward program practices and field building. Yet foundations — especially their boards — are increasingly interested in affecting large systems and whole populations. This trend brings foundations inevitably to a discussion of their role in public policy.

Work in public policy makes sense for foundations. It can help, at least in principle, to leverage investments; serve larger populations; bring innovations to scale; address sustainability challenges; and add another measure of scrutiny resulting in improved effectiveness of specific initiatives through partnerships with government.

Foundations working on policy engage in activities such as convenings supporting policy analysis and reform; task forces and commissions; conducting or commissioning policy analysis and data collection; educating policymakers and providing them with timely information; supporting or running public education campaigns; strengthening the capacity of state and local policymakers to address pressing issues; providing or supporting direct assistance in implementing policy; improving public understanding of policy issues; giving vulnerable groups a voice; collaborating directly with public agencies; and supporting direct services through demonstrations and knowledge-building.

The remainder of this report details substantive youth development policy-related ideas and recommendations that fit comfortably with the generic strategies. Discussions and recommendations are designed to assist foundations in exploring policy connections that, in turn, promote healthy youth development in America. Our self-learning tool, *A Federal Policy Scan for Grant Makers* (Appendix A), is another way to promote discussion and debate among foundation staff, constituencies and board members concerning youth development policy.

The Professional Identity of the Field
and What it Means for Policy

In this report we characterize the professional identity of the youth field as evolving and still young. But what does this mean for policy? The authors believe that expanded and improved policies are justified — more than ever — to build the field and meet the needs of those who seek policy leadership to shape and direct local practices.

In fact, *we believe that America needs an aggressive push for local, state and federal youth policies* whether the field is clear and cohesive or undeveloped and amateurish. Even a cursory reading of indicators of the well being of American youth shows that 9 to 15 million youth may be at risk.[2] Why should young people suffer? Shouldn't policy be aimed at field-building?

Understanding the field's professional identity will help us propose opportunities for foundations to promote new policy directions. Thus, the next section considers how the youth development field defines its professional identity.

Is There a **Youth Development Field?**

Is there a youth development field?[3] For Manny, in the South Bronx of New York, there certainly is: his Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentor, with guidance from local youth development professionals, meets with him weekly. For Latanya, the setting is different — a community-based social services agency affiliated with the National Network for Youth. But she, too, gives a human face to the vitality of the youth development field when her youth counselor helps her acquire life skills and other competencies to avoid a second pregnancy. And for David, just released from a juvenile justice facility, youth development is real as he wearily makes his way home to the projects, wearing his hard hat and tool belt — but not before attending a YouthBuild crew meeting of the young people in the program to decide whether to take political action supporting a new zoning regulation.

In churches, summer camps, after-school programs and community-based youth organizations, youth development activities unfold, day-in and day-out, 24-hours-a-day, year-round. Youth development professionals prowl tough streets and suburban malls; they ply their craft managing storefront facilities and administering big downtown youth-serving agencies.[4]

But do these workers truly form a profession?

Young people, their families and the skilled staff who work with early adolescents and older teens have little doubt about the importance and existence of a youth development field. But, in the academic literature and in educational institutions' career counseling offices, many are uncertain whether youth development is truly a professional field or just a convenient organizing scheme to bring together specialized workers with ties to other professions, such as social work.

How is it that something so real and vital at the human, face-to-face level is the subject of debate and confusion at the analytical level?

A first explanation is that youth development researchers have only recently begun to quantify with precision the scale and nature of this multifaceted field. Knowing neither its size nor exactly who constitutes the field has impeded widespread recognition of youth development as a profession or career option.[5]

Second, until recently, little was known about the professional identification of people who work with youth. The fact that many identify with multiple professions — "I am a social worker with a specialty in adolescent development" or "I am a career YMCA professional working as a program planner" — has not helped the field acquire the professional recognition accorded established groups such as nurses, lawyers or teachers.

Third, funding and policy patterns have supported specialization in areas such as drug abuse, youth unemployment, teen pregnancy, residential care and social services. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, both public and private funders supported youth development professionals in housing authorities, employment and training programs, substance abuse settings, juvenile justice environments, recreation facilities and neighborhood storefronts. Their intent was to reduce young Americans' risky behaviors; but, as an unintended consequence, these patterns drew attention away from and reduced the energy devoted to the broader, crosscutting youth development field.

In the 1980s-1990s, however, grant makers and others shifted attention to strategies supporting youth development *as an organizing concept.* Some of this movement was undoubtedly related to disappointing evaluations associated with programs in traditional "silos"; but in other cases, effective individual and group campaigns stimulated the change.[6]

Thus, despite forces of specialization and other challenges, youth development is beginning to bear some of the markings of a true professional field.

What is **Youth Development**?

Youth development is an elastic and multi-dimensional construct. A sizable literature covers just its definition — a sure mark, in our opinion, of a field "in the making" rather than one that has arrived. Does an under-capitalized field need to use its resources on further definitional studies?[7]

> **RECOMMENDATION:** We recommend a moratorium on further efforts to define youth development and encourage using the existing literature and information to influence policy development and reform, curricula, executive education and program design.

In any case, youth development certainly embraces (1) a process of human growth and development, (2) a philosophical orientation to social development and community; and (3) a programmatic framework for youth services. The next three sections focus on these themes; the fourth section takes up the field's emphasis on assets rather than deficits.

Youth Development as a Process of Human Growth and Development

Youth development, by definition, is age-specific. It assumes that adolescents need to complete specific growth-related tasks if they are to develop into mature adults.[8] Some of the literature shows how these tasks vary by age. Most studies, however, are remarkably silent about differences within the youth span, as if young people ages 10 to 24 were a homogeneous group. Specificity about correct and incorrect offerings to youth of different ages is not on the radar screen of many youth policies. Should youth development policy treat 10- to 12-year-olds the same as 12- to 15-year-olds, 16- to 18-year-olds, or 19- 24-year-olds?

We believe that a wonderful opportunity exists for policymakers and grant makers to help the field think in more "age-specific" terms within the youth span. In policy circles and even programs, age differences and age-appropriate criteria are considered rather sloppily. Sadly, we cannot even say with certainty who is served. In our published report for the Lilly Endowment, "America's Middle Child: Making Age Count in Youth Policy" (Hahn 1995), we develop this point further after reviewing 100+ federal programs serving youth. In Appendix B, a figure from this report, while out of date, shows the lack of coherence and muddled approach to age differences and age targeting in federal programs and policy. An analysis by the report's lead author showed that 70 percent of the programs reviewed served youth without indicating a preference for older or younger youth; 22 percent served older youth; and

less than one percent served early adolescents. Our report lamented the federal government's failure to take prevention seriously by focusing on younger teens, despite rhetoric to the contrary.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Grant makers supporting policy projects need to signal the importance of (1) youth work's developmental nature, (2) making age-specific distinctions, and (3) embedding indicators of age-appropriate practices in relevant policies and regulations.

Youth Development as a Programmatic Framework

Several studies have identified elements of effective youth development programs. For example, in a needs assessment conducted for the national office of 4-H, researchers identified the following:

- A focused and articulated vision
- A sustained and holistic approach
- A supportive, flexible atmosphere for staff
- Collaborations with other community programs
- Workers who are committed to their clients
- Caring relationships between staff and young people
- An empowerment orientation
- Creative problem-solving

Similarly, in 1994, the National Assembly and the federal Center for Substance Abuse and Prevention convened a forum on successful youth development approaches to preventing alcohol and drug abuse. The forum identified six essential elements of effective youth development:

- A comprehensive strategy with clear mission and goals. Effective programs know where they are going, monitor their performance, and are flexible and responsive to the comprehensive needs of youth.
- Committed, caring, professional leadership. Effective programs have a trained staff that knows how to create positive and empowering relationships with young people.
- Youth-centered activities in youth-accessible facilities. Effective programs offer a diverse array of age-appropriate, accessible and safe activities for young people in their communities.

- Culturally competent and diverse programs. Effective programs are inclusive and promote cultural awareness, sensitivity and competence.

- Youth ownership and involvement. Effective programs recognize young people as resources, not problems. They empower youth by involving them in the planning, delivery and evaluation of services that affect them.

- A positive focus including all youth. Effective programs are holistic, focusing on mind, body and soul, and are open to all youth.

As noted earlier, further investments to define the field seem unnecessary. What is necessary is to "port" these excellent ideas into public policy — through the League of Cities' new Institute for Youth, Education, and Families and its ready network of mayors; the National Conference of State Legislatures; the National Governors Association; the National Association of Counties; and other public interest groups in the policy realm. How well are these concepts known in state policy development circles? Would state legislators, or city or county officials, see these principles as substitutes for traditional ways of justifying policies? If not, do we understand why not? Most importantly, what do these youth development principles imply for policy? Multi-year support? Standards for youth workers? Holistic programming? Comprehensiveness? One-Stops? The field needs to get tough policy issues on the table and move beyond the usual rhetoric about "helping all children become all they can be."

Youth Development as a Philosophical Orientation to Social Development and Community

Youth development takes a positive approach to and is committed to involving youth, their families and communities. It seeks proactively to provide opportunities and supports for healthy development in an environmental context. Young people are not "clients"; their families are not incidental to youth development; and their neighbors are not indifferent bystanders. "Empowerment" is as fundamental to youth development as to community development.

A number of groups work at the nexus of youth and community development. Brandeis' Center for Youth and Communities and the National Network for Youth co-publish the *Community Youth Development Journal* focusing on this nexus and, in fact, the National Network coined the community youth development expression roughly six years ago. The theme has been a sustained focus of the National Community Building Network and the National Network and Assembly membership. Local groups with national reputations such as YouthNet in Kansas City (see the YouthNet profile on page 63) and other states have embraced the concept. It is fundamental to YouthBuild and a growing list of initiatives around the country. Milbrey McLaughlin and other writers see and support the close connections between youth development and community context, as do many foundations.

The Ford Foundation has invested in a cluster of community youth development (CYD) initiatives including Private/Public Ventures' (P/PV) multi-site CYD demonstration project, the Academy of Educational Development's Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, the National 4-H Council's Innovation Center, and a youth group, Community IMPACT! These efforts aim to increase the number and strength of local infrastructures supporting a CYD approach, promote policies and programs that deepen CYD, and promote youth leadership. When Cornerstone Consulting completes its assessment of these initiatives, we may find that such efforts need *policy support* to fulfill their mission as catalysts for enduring change.

One major piece of U.S. youth development policy is the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (administered by the U.S. Department of Education and stimulated by creative Mott Foundation grant making). This policy should interest community or place-oriented advocates as well as youth development advocates, and provides a marvelous opportunity for foundations to test their understanding of tangible policy issues that cut across youth and community domains. Yet on the policy front, how many foundation staff understand that 21st Century initiative funds go to schools, not community groups, and that a reform movement seeks to expand eligibility to community groups? How many understand that the 21st Century formulae include no special incentives for CBO collaboration? How many are following the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization, which includes 21st Century funding? Grant makers will not be able to respond to these policy rich questions creatively without up-to-date knowledge.

It's the Assets, Stupid (Not the Deficits): Implications for Policy

The widely disseminated Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development report, *A Matter of Time* (1992), defined youth development as the process through which "adolescents actively seek, and are assisted, to meet their basic needs and build their individual assets or competencies." Two years later, in *Building Resiliency,* the National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Human Service Organizations found that, at its most basic, youth development means purposely seeking to meet youth needs and build the competencies that enable youth to become successful adults.

These definitions focus on positive youth outcomes, an approach that distinguishes youth development from deficit approaches often found in traditional treatment or prevention programs for youth. In the past — and often today — youth have been viewed as problem populations or perhaps threats. This negative, fragmented view has led many to focus narrowly on treating problems or preventing risky behaviors, rather than on the *full range* of competencies required for young people to become productive, healthy adults.

Many nonprofit youth programs have used a positive developmental model for decades. The federal government, more than twenty years ago, through its Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration, identified four relevant adolescent needs: a sense of competency, a sense of usefulness, a sense of belonging, and a sense of power or potency. But now, as never before, youth service agencies and organizations throughout the country are trying to reach consensus about what they can do collectively to focus on and build these assets.

Social policies that support moving from a "deficit" to an "asset" perspective are needed more than ever. However, when policymakers (and grant makers who encourage their work) move away from "deficits" they are likely also to move away from "targeted" policies. Hence the big policy battle concerns who shall be served — all (with little money) or those most in need (with some money)? Foundations working in the policy arena cannot operate behind nice sounding generalizations about "preventing problems before they occur," "meeting all children's development needs," "implementing an asset approach," and "reinforcing natural and universal developmental milestones shared by all youth."[9] Policy must distribute limited resources. Who will get these resources? The suburbs? The large downtown youth-serving agencies? Community-based groups? Issues of political feasibility, stigma, equity, efficiency all come to the fore.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** We encourage foundations to put the tough choices that flow from the youth development paradigm on the table for open debate and clarification[10], focusing on how an assets approach affects who will get new resources.

As a tool to make the implicit explicit, we produced a "think piece" comparing the costs of a universal youth development strategy (in the U.S. and in two states, Kansas and Missouri) with the costs of targeted approaches. These calculations and text (see Appendix C) are based on assumptions and algorithms that can be challenged or altered in "what if" planning exercises. The latter is precisely how we hope this information will be used. Similarly, our discussion of state youth development policy on page 30 calculates the differences between serving all youth and specific target groups.

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, in their 1989 report, *Turning Points,* identified sixteen critical tasks for adolescents to achieve in order to become productive and responsible adults. These tasks were clustered in five developmental areas: cognitive, social, physical, emotional, and moral development. The report was instrumental in defining a holistic approach that has informed the emerging field's philosophy and recent federal youth development programming policy. Many programs have tried to use this information to fine-tune or radically alter curricula, program designs, staff training and strategies for working with youth, and many (though not enough) have benefited from limited federal or state support to do this. (See Appendix D for a discussion on federal youth development funding streams.)

It is one thing, however, to jump on the youth development bandwagon, bemoan the lack of meaningful services for young people, and agree that youth programs should offer multiple, friendly, customer-oriented, age appropriate, and long-term services to meet cognitive, social, physical, emotional, and moral development needs. It is another for funders to recognize that this calls for forward funding (so agencies can provide long term services to the same youth) and support for basic infrastructure, program operations, and professional development. The Quantum Opportunities Project (QOP), a Brandeis evaluated pilot program now being replicated around the country, embodies many of these principles. QOP (in the Ford Foundation pilot) provided forward funding, enabling programs to serve the same youth from 9th grade through freshman year in college. One can count very few programs — or policies — like QOP.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Funders should support this new policy frontier with longer investments, administrative support, predictable funding, an array of services and aggressive outreach.

The partial, yet encouraging, shift — from focusing on problems and correcting undesirable behavior to the full development of young people — reflects a growing consensus that youth development, as a paradigm, may be a more effective way to produce positive youth outcomes and reduce risky behaviors than more traditional treatment and prevention approaches. Many foundations (such as Ford, Kellogg, International Youth Foundation, and

Kauffman), recognizing this shift, have understood the close connection between promoting "big" ideas (such as the youth development model) and program and policy developments. These grant makers have, therefore, supported media such as *Youth Today,* the *Community Youth Development Journal,* and publications by national trade organizations and others. In allied fields this strategy is commonplace — compare Pew's support of media strategies (and a Center), Casey's ChildTrends and other support on reporting of children's issues, or Kaiser's support to media for health coverage.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundations' policy-oriented portfolios should include media-supported paradigm-shifting activities and promote deeper coverage of policy information by those media — especially coverage focused on tough policy tradeoffs and choices.

What Do We Know About
State Youth Development Policy?

Five generalizations about state youth development policy may be culled from the information reviewed:

- *First, policy development in youth development is young, underdeveloped, and inconsistent across states.*

- *Second, the size of policy development grants is small compared to the states' lofty goals of universal systems that will also (somehow) target groups at risk. A few states are beginning to allocate funds to after-school programs, but the scale is still small.* As noted in a Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (EMKF) report, *When School is Out* (2000), Delaware earmarked $10 million in 1999-2000 for after-school programs, Kentucky $37 million, and New York up to $10 million — all in new funds. For each of these states we divided the new dollars by the total youth population up to 17-year-olds. Delaware would spend $52 per child, Kentucky $38, and New York $2. If we restrict the analysis to 6- to 12-year-olds, the spending is roughly $141 in Delaware, $103 in Kentucky, and $6 in New York. *These crude data show graphically the modest scale of even the best new spending plans, assuming universal spending goals.* Now consider a targeted effort serving, say, 15 percent of 6- to 12-year olds. Spending per child increases: Delaware $945, Kentucky $692, and New York $39. This illustrates the differences between focusing on target groups and providing universal services.

- *Third, many state policy activities are in information, training, and collaboration.* There is far less support for tangible program services, and even less for true youth development programs that are comprehensive and long-term.

- *Fourth, the federal and state policy direction appears to be running against the youth development paradigm.* A recent paper from Chapin Hall Center for Children and Families (Quern et al., 2000) notes that the rise in categorical public funding has forced agencies formerly more oriented to "youth development" to cater to specialized groups (see also Appendix D). The result is more services redirected to younger children, more money spent on insurance and staffing, fewer overall programs, fewer youth development programs and smaller enrollments.

- *Fifth, few if any sources of information exist about state initiatives.* State-level evaluation is generally weak, and support of regional watchdog organizations has not often led to a voice in state or

urban youth development policymaking. Moreover, studies of, say, a juvenile justice policy with a youth development component are not linked intellectually to comparable developments, such as youth initiatives in an Enterprise Zone site.

We found key information concerning what state youth development policy supports on two Web sites and in a 1997 report.

The major Web site covering state youth policy (www.nydic.org), sponsored by the National Youth Development Information Clearinghouse and launched with DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest funds, lists youth development policy initiatives in only 11 states. This may reflect the newness of the Web site or peoples' knowledge of it, but we think it also speaks to the immaturity of the field. Most of the legislative initiatives reported are under development and call for increases in after-school learning opportunities and programs; coordinated statewide policies for all youth; connections to "place-based" or safe neighborhood development; "get tough" juvenile crime proposals; use of states' Tobacco Fund settlement resources; reduction of school violence through increased spending on youth development; use of TANF funds for youth development (Wisconsin); an expansion of an After School Opportunity Fund (Maryland); and a call for a new Youth Development Fund Pennsylvania). The Kansas listing describes the new Kansas Action for Children proposal calling for before- and after-school programming for children and youth, with plans for community input to help formulate a policy agenda. Missouri is not listed.

A second major Web site covering state policy development, maintained by the National Governor's Association (www.nga.org), has information on 41 states but focuses on only four that received 1998 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) State Youth Development Collaborative Projects dollars: Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts and New York. (Other recipients were Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Nebraska and Oregon.) NGA characterizes these states' efforts as follows:

■ Developing policy in support of enhancing state-local government relationships

■ Developing policy that is universal but inclusive of "at-risk" youth

■ Building on existing collaborations and organizations

■ Articulating a statewide policy and improving understanding of youth development

■ Statewide training programs based on best practices

■ Involving youth in planning

■ Finding ways to use TANF, Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and Welfare to Work funds

■ Evaluation

NGA's *State Youth Development Opportunities to Improve Outcomes for At-Risk Youth* describes the following interesting ideas under way in these states (note that each could be embedded in foundation grant making designed in collaboration with state officials):

- Task forces

- Statewide youth development calendars

- Statewide conferences

- Leadership guides for high school students considering youth development careers

- Web sites

- Youth in policymaking roles

- Online forums and discussion groups

- Youth development frameworks and outreach about the youth development paradigm

- Youth development curricula and training for frontline workers

- Peer to peer training and technical assistance

- Evaluation and audits/needs assessments of providers

- Resource listings of statewide programs and advocates

- Special task forces to attract/win federal grant competitions

- New resources and new statewide grant programs covering an array of services with a youth development focus

- Draft new statewide policy; put out for comment.

This youth development coverage is in the NGA's Best Practices Center. Additional information for state policymakers is found in their Extra Learning Opportunities (ELO) database, an initiative supported by the Mott Foundation and the Wallace Funds.

Finally, The Finance Project reviewed four strategies to promote "comprehensive, community-based services for children and families" (O'Brien 1997). The first is state support of local collaboratives to achieve more integration of services. Missouri Caring Communities, an example of the latter, brings in youth development themes. The second involves pooling state funds to address youth who are at risk of out-of-home care. The third is locally driven efforts to address these themes through grants programs. The fourth involves pooling state and county funds and concentrating them on specific children who are the responsibility of multiple agencies. Although not youth development strategies per se, these state financing innovations could stimulate new and improved efforts in youth development.

The **Diversity and Scale**
of Youth Development Programs

Youth development programs involve youth in a wide range of activities, including sports, recreation, peer counseling, teaching, mentoring, tutoring, academic enrichment, arts, values education, leadership development, community service, volunteerism, literacy, after school programs, youth employment, career counseling, job, life and parenting skills training, crime and delinquency prevention, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, camping, environmental education, and ethnic and cultural enrichment.

The incredible diversity of youth development subfields is both a primary virtue and a source of definitional confusion. The 1990s witnessed increased efforts to define programs across subfields. For example, National Collaboration for Youth organizations rallied to a statement in the Youth Development Community Block Grant Act of 1995 (S673 and HR 2807), which defined a youth development program as one that helps youth develop social, moral, emotional, physical, and cognitive competencies; conducts activities with primarily a nonacademic focus; employs primarily active and experiential learning methods; and promotes identified competencies through group and one-to-one activities.

The 1992 Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development report, *A Matter of Time,* identified five kinds of organizations that deliver community-based youth development programs and services:

- Private, nonprofit, nationally affiliated youth organizations, such as Girl Scouts of the USA, 4-H, and Boys & Girls Clubs of America

- Grassroots youth development organizations not affiliated with any national structures, such as The Door in New York City

- Religious youth organizations

- Adult service clubs, sports organizations, senior citizens groups, and museums

- Public-sector institutions such as libraries and parks and recreation departments

A related but unmet challenge is to identify the professionals in the field. *A Matter of Time* estimates that roughly 17,000 organizations offer community-based youth development programs, but does not estimate how many professionals they employ. National Collaboration for Youth members have estimated that 40,000 full-time employees work for their nationally affiliated agencies alone. The National Network for Youth represents more than 750 community-based organizations. The Child Welfare League has a large and

important network, as does the American Camping Association, America's Promise, Junior Leagues, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Boy Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, the 4-H, Girl Scouts, Girls Incorporated, National Collaboration for Youth, National Urban League, the YMCA and the YWCA. The list of major players who have signed on to the Younger Americans Act also suggests the landscape of groups concerned with youth development policy.

Even without numbers, however, it might be useful to categorize these groups to see who does what and whether new policy specialists are needed in the field. Note that nearly all are membership groups. The trade organization/ national offices of these groups are likely to have a special audience, target group, and set of services in mind when advocating for policies. A few other groups interested in policy reform are intermediaries performing evaluations and other studies, providing technical assistance, and engaging in policy work as only one aspect of a larger workplan. The field has few if any examples of groups that specialize in youth development policy but are not programs per se.

Thus the field contains a mix of agendas with little focus on policy analysis. Observations by a U.S. Senate aide who has watched the field for several decades expand on this theme. Writing to this report's principal author (in response to an op-ed piece), the aide notes that political differences among groups are neither widely discussed nor understood, a phenomenon that likely retards policy development:

> *With regard to stakeholder balkanization, the schools are the primary renegade in the current mix. The current incarnation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers with its huge increase in funding has given them the notion that they are the biggest and most intelligent player in the game — causing them to assume a "take no prisoners" hard line in efforts to share the wealth.*

> *The [youth program] players are for the most part social service types. None want to appear in public to be money hoarding or money greedy. [But they are operating programs and need resources.] They want to appear above it all, seeking the greater good for all children and youth. But behind closed doors, it is contentious as any health care battle. That makes it difficult to raise [the differences and issues] in public since the embattled parties will each demurely state that they really don't care as long as the goal is met. At least with health care you can publicly see the confrontations that exist in reality. [On the youth side] it is difficult to wrestle Jell-O, which is how the public side of the debate too often looks.*

The field needs new entities focusing on policy development. Excellent models are the Center for Budget and Economic Priorities and the Center for Community Change. Few groups work as effectively on social policy issues for vulnerable Americans.

One interviewee with local- and national-level experience stated:

It is essential that there be some umbrella, policy-focused intermediary organization for youth that has some distance from operating programs. It is ridiculous to expect local providers to scour the landscape, design and deliver more coherent services, conduct budget analysis, and track available funds. Policy, advocacy, the big picture and the alignment of resources into a comprehensive system of services is simply too difficult, time consuming, costly and overwhelming, especially for community-based groups.

Further Work Needed
to Make Youth Development
a True Profession

In "Youth Development: A Profession in the Making" (Hahn and Raley, 1998), we argue that youth development might be considered a profession only in a qualified sense and only by meeting benchmarks associated with non-traditional professions. Greenwood's traditional approach to defining a profession (1957) calls for training centers, accreditation, curriculum, admissions, and licensing systems that regulate and control entry into the profession. Without firm accreditation requirements and a process of credentialing, workers will likely have low pay and questionable professional status.

By this classic definition, the youth development profession is, at best, in its infancy. Doctors and nurses must pass board exams; lawyers must pass bar exams; most states now require social workers to be licensed. If youth development is to move into professional recognition, its practitioners must organize to advocate restrictions that separate those who may call themselves youth development professionals from those who may not.

The concept of "building a field, establishing a profession" is an excellent organizing principle for grant makers interested in new youth development funding streams. Foundations led the way to professionalize other groups — schoolteachers, microbiologists, and space scientists, to name a few. Today, working with policymakers, they might do the same in youth development.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundations should lead the way in building the youth development field and establishing youth development as a profession.

There is precedence in related developmental fields. State law increasingly requires child development practitioners, for example, to be credentialed or licensed. Foundation-policymaker partnerships have nurtured the child development field toward true professional status.

But the credentialing issue is complex. On the one hand, it might enhance youth development professionals' status and provide better-qualified candidates for employment. On the other, lack of a credential might exclude some currently in the field from the profession. Credentialing will also stratify the field and may undercut the competing goal of building a youth development culture throughout the field.

Some even feel that establishing a credentialing process is premature and should wait until we understand standards and outcomes better. While we disagree — because we suspect that more than enough work has been done to lay the groundwork — it is a sensible point (DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, 1996) and worth considering.

At the regional level, EMKF has supported course enrollments to help after-school program staff, mostly child development, meet state standards. The Local Investment Commission, an intermediary, also assists after-school programs to meet licensing requirements through their network of programs. Expanding these models to youth development is under way through the noteworthy B.E.S.T. Initiative: Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers, supported by DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest (see the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work within the Academy for Educational Development). It is administered locally in Kansas City through YouthNet. This locally driven but nationally significant model includes, among other features, a Youth Development Worker Certificate to improve and enhance youth workers' training and educational opportunities.

The existence of ethical codes of conduct is another indicator of professional status. Such a code is not in place for most youth development professionals — though it waits only the emergence of an association of practitioners who can create and approve such a code. Establishing such an association would help the field become a recognized profession. Many fine groups could lead this effort, but because of normal organizational conflicts and representation issues, establishing something akin to the National Association for the Education of Young Children may be challenging. Careful thinking and a consortia approach are needed. Might there one day be a membership organization that spans groups such as National Network for Youth, The National Collaboration for Youth of the National Assembly of Health and Human Services Agencies, YouthBuild, The National Youth Employment Coalition, and the Child Welfare League of America, to name just a few? Could workers across these groups and others share membership in an umbrella group? This is an opportunity for policy people and foundations to explore.

Forming such a group from inception creates a wonderful opportunity to build in policy capacity from the start. Such capacity has often developed late in other fields. For example, AARP started out as a group purchaser of insurance products for older people and only later became a potent policy force.

A professional youth development culture may be the element of professional life that is least amenable to change by outsiders. Government and philanthropy have found it especially difficult to support interventions aimed at changing professional cultures. Demands on funders have been to support direct services rather than "infrastructure," such as work settings and staff training. This challenge — unlikely to fade anytime soon — remains fertile ground for new policies and investments.

One strategy for changing organizational cultures, as well as the field, is to support professional and organizational development activities, including professional associations, affinity groups (especially important in the multi-faceted youth development field), organizational renewal projects, information exchange through clearinghouses and electronic forums, and peer-to-peer practitioner networks. The Rockefeller Foundation is launching a modest organizational strengthening initiative for youth and adult workforce development programs to address similar goals. YouthNet in Kansas City is one of the few organizations in the U.S. working exclusively on this challenge.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundations should support professional and organizational development activities.

Foundations and policymakers typically see support for "basic training" in management and operations as "someone else's responsibility," with the result that we underinvest in infrastructure. Also important are policy monitoring training: following legislative developments, community organizing around policy reforms, learning to access policy resources, policy advocacy skills, and so forth. The more grassroots an organization, the more severe are the operational challenges.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Grant makers should support activities and policy making that address critical *basic training in financial controls, human resources, planning, and development.* Without such attention, programs have little chance of affecting youth outcomes.

As noted above, a key criterion for entrance into a profession is educational attainment. For example, one must attend schools of law, medicine, or nursing to be admitted into those professions. Much of the youth development "curriculum" is in-service training conducted on the job by those who employ youth development professionals. While many nationally affiliated youth development agencies have benefited from training models developed by their national offices — and enhanced in recent years by support from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, EMKF, and other philanthropies — unaffiliated, community-based organizations still face many unmet training needs. The next two sections discuss education and training issues.

Advancing In-Service Training Programs

In-service training is crucial to the successful performance of youth development professionals. Unfortunately, many youth-serving agencies, especially those not nationally affiliated, have limited resources and capacity to provide in-service training to staff. Because of a desire to ensure that their funds support services rather than agency overhead, funders often restrict the percentage of a budget that can be used for administration, the category that usually includes staff training. Attention in funding circles continues to be riveted on program design, largely ignoring the people who make the designs work or fail. Without staff training, young people are not well served.

While everyone agrees on the value of in-service training for youth development professionals, the most effective way to provide it is still being explored. Training programs, when they have existed at all, have usually been held at large national or regional conferences that are often too costly and time-consuming for direct service workers to attend. Effective training programs must address the needs of all youth development professionals, not just planners, managers, and administrators.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundations should partner with state agencies on an ambitious in-service training program that is *accessible* in the communities in which youth development professionals work, *philosophically consistent* with the values of those being trained, focused on youth development core competencies, and *accompanied by follow-up and technical assistance* so professionals can integrate what they have learned with practice (These recommendations have been made by the Academy for Educational Development, Center for Youth Policy Development, and others).

State officials co-sponsoring these events could encourage inclusion of policy issues such as access, quality, and accountability, while foundations could bring additional interests and content. The DHHS grant program to states for youth development is a start, but its resources are few.

A number of efforts are under way to design youth development in-service training programs. The U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has funded the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research (CYDPR) to design a 30-hour curriculum and pilot it in 10 communities. The curriculum is designed for direct service youth workers and supervisors, which enhances the likelihood that the training will be integrated into agency practice. Our group at Brandeis University, national offices of multi-site youth initiatives, and other groups also have curricula and training methods.

Since 1990, the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund has supported more than 1400 training events for more than 28,000 youth development staff. At first, the Fund provided national youth-serving organizations with resources to train staff in their programs. Since 1993, however, the Fund has been encouraging grantees to use a sector-wide approach, as youth development principles and needed staff competencies have become better understood (DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, 1996). This approach has advanced the development of training curricula with the potential for adaptation and use by other organizations.

The DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund has also supported strengthening community-based training programs. Through its B.E.S.T. Initiative, CYDPR has identified eight community-based systems that are making exemplary efforts to train youth development professionals but lack the resources to expand their training (Academy for Educational Development, 1996).

RECOMMENDATION: Foundations should support policy that builds a state-by-state accreditation system for in-service youth development training, tied to a policy scan of key state-level policy stakeholders, and requiring documentation so lessons can be shared. YouthNet's Standards Development Team is exploring program standards and staff requirements through a comprehensive planning process.

Establishing Pre-Service Education Programs

The standard route to a professional career is to enroll in a college or university-based professional school that provides a credential certifying one as a professional.

At present few pre-service education programs are aimed at youth development careers; fewer still are supported by state policy. American Humanics' work promoting human services careers has been widely recognized and evaluated favorably. A University of Northern Iowa program offers an undergraduate certification and a Youth and Human Service Administration master's degree. The curriculum teaches youth development, leadership, and management. Others (some noted in Hahn and Raley (1998)) include Springfield College, Cambridge College, Brandeis University (graduate level), Tufts, and the University of Minnesota, to cite just a few. YouthNet's courses, offered at Kansas City area community colleges, serve as a model for a well thought out curriculum.

Increasing Career Awareness

Few students enter the youth development field via traditional routes. Too often, students, career counselors, and others do not recognize youth development as a career alternative. Barriers to recognition include the lack of information on what jobs exist within youth development programs and the lack of uniform job titles and job descriptions across organizations.

These issues need to be addressed, but equally important work remains to be done to educate young Americans about the exciting career of youth development. A new cadre of youth development managers and direct service workers is needed. Many grassroots youth programs will close once the founders retire because there is no "second in command." We also must find better methods to retain young direct service workers and prevent their burnout.

The Benton Foundation is especially skilled in developing these campaigns. Several authors in a recent P/PV publication (Walker 2000) develop these ideas further.

A campaign to promote youth work need not just be media-based. Local intermediaries that already define their mission as building competence and skill among youth programs could be useful allies. This includes groups like the pioneering YouthNet in Kansas City with its strong ties to young people and their families. (See CYDPR (1998) for a good review of these inter- mediaries.) These connections between intermediaries and families could lead to workshops and other activities to promote youth work as a career. While a campaign's ultimate success will depend on young workers' experiences on the job, the more it can create common cultures and undertake active professional development activities, the more likely that young staff will identify proudly — and stay — with the youth development field.

Promoting Professional Identification

Professionals are expected to identify themselves as part of their field. There is evidence that youth development workers increasingly identify themselves as such. In one study described by the National Assembly/ National Collaboration for Youth, 77.4 percent of workers surveyed considered themselves youth development professionals. The National Network (1993) found that 44 percent of those surveyed identified with the youth development field. On the other hand, a journalist examining this issue for the National Collaboration for Youth found that most people she encountered did not at first identify primarily with youth development. When asked, "what field or profession do you identify with?" most interviewees responded "camping, after-school program, or YMCA" first. However, nearly all said "yes" when asked directly, "do you identify with the youth development field?"

Identification with youth development appears to be on the rise. Yet promoting further professional identification will take time. Workers must be trained in the youth development perspective and have opportunities to connect with other professionals.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundations should nurture youth development publications (including relatively impoverished outlets such as *Youth Today*) and professional associations promoting the idea of youth work as a profession to develop the emerging professional identity.

What Do Foundations Know
About America's Residual Youth Policies?

We don't know the answer to the question posed in the heading, but some have observed that people who are not adequately oriented to policy work increasingly lead philanthropy in the youth field. Recruiting practitioners to work in foundations, while a wonderful idea in some ways, may contribute to this situation. And while foundations are diverse, with different staffing patterns and interests, we think it safe to make the following recommendation:

> **RECOMMENDATION:** In-service executive education and professional development for foundation staff should be a part of any portfolio of youth development policy responses.

General policy, as well as youth development policy, can be, and is, taught in leading social policy schools. Customized training for busy foundation executives is warranted. There are precedents, for example, in health care.

If we accept the premise that many foundations (especially newer ones) neither understand youth development policy nor understand how their leadership might mobilize public and political support on its behalf, then it is natural for foundations to turn to the field for advice and direction. Sadly, many youth (or youth-community) development advocates have spent more time in internal debates about nomenclature and conceptual nuance than in defining a policy framework and effectively communicating why adopting such a framework will improve national well-being. (The Younger Americans Act proposal is a notable exception to this characterization.) For advocates and "experts" to adopt a plaintive tone or admonish foundations for not exercising strategic leadership avoids the hard truth that the case for youth development policy has not been well articulated.

Lessons from Allied Fields and Youth Development — Worlds Apart

At this point it might be useful to consider the standing of policy in the allied field of health care. Why have so many major foundations been leaders in health policy monitoring, development, implementation, advocacy, research, histories, convenings, evaluations, capacity building, and so forth? The policy domains are worlds apart, their distance measured by a variety of indicators, including:

Conceptual Clarity: Health care has definitional coherence; youth development, as a field, is immature and still taking shape. It is demographically fragmented; its scope and reach remain ambiguous. Is "youth" a continuum or a fixed category? When does it begin and end? What are its boundary lines and essential properties?

Stakeholder Balkanization: The many health care stakeholders fall within a narrow range. Everyone and no one is responsible for youth development. Public schools, families, community-based organizations, the criminal justice system, and churches all play roles, but there is no common script, no seamless stream of funding or governance. The result is a fiscal and jurisdictional crazy quilt. Few forums enable stakeholders to convene for debate and dialogue; and it is far from apparent under whose auspices such a convening could take place, given the debates described earlier (schools vs. community groups, large vs. small agencies, etc.). Though everyone has bemoaned such an uncoordinated and unaccountable "non-system," only now, with the Younger Americans Act, have the bare outlines of a national policy reform movement emerged.

Intellectual Rigor: Health care research is well established. Youth development has yet to produce an intellectually distinguished body of literature and analysis. That comment stings, but foundations have sponsored and researchers have created a good number of strikingly banal reports.

Prestige: For reasons that go beyond intellectual deficits, youth development policy lacks the prestige of health policy. For foundations and their boards, the pedigree of a problem (and its problem solvers) counts for a lot. Health care is associated with science and technology, heroic personal endeavor and collective progress, measurable indices and outcomes, and practitioners who bring wealth, power, and a dignified lineage. Youth development policy (to the extent that such a phrase conveys meaning during a board meeting) conjures up direct service practitioners, daycare centers, and poor people.

Universality: Health care concerns everybody, whether young or old, rich or poor. It deals with disease, pain and mortality. Youth development concerns something less existential and more transitory. You age out of youth; you don't age out of living. Youth is a "demographic," a special interest.

Stigma: We do not feel stigmatized about being cared for when our bodies are sick. Putting ourselves in the hands of medical specialists does not represent an abdication of autonomy. But youth policy, with its whiff of compensatory and remedial programs, seems aimed at families unable to carry their own weight.

Efficacy: Heath care represents interventions that work (or at least appear to work) and whose outcomes lend themselves to evidence-based analysis. Youth development policy lacks a corresponding technical repertoire — though progress is being made in this area.

Urgency: Health care gobbles up $1.2 billion a day. Runaway costs and access and delivery problems have led to a "crisis." Health policy is hugely consequential. Youth policy conveys no equivalent sense of urgency. Costs of failure are not immediate or perilous.

Ideology: The ideological battle lines have been drawn far more clearly in health than in youth development policy. As a result, activist, policy-oriented foundations perceive a point of leverage. Much hangs in the balance. Foundations feel they can play a pivotal role. This may be changing, but Drew Altman said in the 1980s, while he was at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "We saw ourselves as key players in a largely not-for-profit health care community, a community that had a great interest in working with the philanthropic community and in the demonstration, research and training projects that foundations funded."

Needed: Re-framing the Discourse

Under its new president, Karen Hein, The William T. Grant Foundation has indicated a willingness to help re-frame discourse on youth policy. The agenda will involve support for youth development research, initiatives to reform systems affecting youth, and communication campaigns portraying youth as assets while accurately depicting the barriers they face. All these activities are worthwhile. Yet as a relatively small player, this foundation's most important role may be to stimulate and focus a wider dialogue within the funding community as a whole. An especially important audience might be new dot.com philanthropy, which seems presently focused on school reform, not youth development. Other foundations are working on similar strategic campaigns. For example, the AfterSchool Alliance builds awareness of after-school programs broadly and in specific communities, and is organizing groups originally in a Mott Foundation-U.S. Department of Education partnership.

Are there clear youth development principles around which to forge consensus and shape legislation? What issues (economic competitiveness, civic obligation) might be woven into a master narrative capable of influencing public consciousness and political decision-making? Can the costs and consequences of the currently disjointed system be more effectively and dramatically represented? Is there is an effective "hook" for these efforts?

Along with new messages, can we identify and recruit new messengers? Youth development policy is likely to be a non-starter so long as it remains a concern unique to social advocates and practitioners. We must make concerted efforts to broaden the base to include "unlikely suspects," e.g., representatives from business and the military, two groups that already understand the concept of long-term investments in human capital. General Colin Powell's role in America's Promise is a model for this recommendation. America's Promise promotes voluntarism more than specific policy, but does support and promote passage of the Younger Americans Act. More such linkages are necessary.

Possibly, with a lot of patience and shrewd cross-sectoral organizing, youth development policy will assume coherent shape. People will share goals, and not simply draw a blank as happens in many policy circles today. But in the end, the field is up against many obstacles. Because of disparate responsibilities, jurisdictions, and governance structures, building and sustaining the political coalition needed to push an ambitious policy agenda is exceedingly difficult. There is not a perceived crisis as there is with health care. We do not have vested commercial interests that can bankroll a lobbying effort. The field itself — a field, as this report indicates, that is only "in the making" — is unlikely to garner the prestige that helps anoint health care and endow it with a status that is attractive to foundations.

This brings us to some remaining recommendation before turning to a closer look at Missouri and Kansas.

Final Recommendations
from the National Scan

In this struggle, we need policies that unite kindred souls. The following sections touch on several potentially unifying themes in youth development: working across allied fields; finding common ground between the large, better-funded agencies and the undercapitalized little guys in community settings; breaking down the traditional categorical or "deficit" funding streams; assuring affordability for the poorest families; and working in partnership with local officials.

The Allied Fields

When we recommend a distinct recognition of youth development policy, we do not reject linkages, but feel strongly that they should be equal, planned, and intentional. Implicit, perhaps unintentional linkages exist already. For example, in some states youth development policy is a de facto part of early childhood or criminal justice policy, and these fields call the shots. Leaders should consider how to link youth development positively with other fields, such as early childhood, school reform, criminal justice, and even gerontology.

In one of our interviews, a respondent said with passion:

> *You will lose! You seem to want to create a separate youth development field. You seem to be bemoaning the use of youth development principles in criminal justice and other allied fields. But think about it. If youth development ever does become a universal system, do you really think that small community groups will control it? No, it will be the schools. The best you can hope for is an infusion strategy in which youth development principles are infused in categorical funding traditions. And linkages and coordination strategies under this policy scenario will be central.*

The Big Guns and the Little Guys

Much of what is now known about the field has been derived from private, nonprofit, nationally affiliated religious youth organizations, adult service clubs, sports organizations, and public youth service programs. Considerably less is known about youth development professionals in grassroots, unaffiliated community-based organizations. Again, creating a professional association or helping community oriented membership groups such as the National Network for Youth to dig even deeper into communities would be helpful. New members would define their needs, and heretofore-unaffiliated and underrepresented agency workers would have access to professional development activities.

The Enduring Legacy of Policy "Silos"

Despite some movement in public policy, such as the Younger Americans Act legislation, funding streams have not yet been redirected away from categorical, problem-oriented programs. Policymakers and funders need to understand the importance of holistic youth development strategies and profession-building activities. This is the uphill battle described throughout this report, but the goal must be clear: an explicit and intentional youth policy in states and supported by the federal government.

In a sense, the policy shift toward youth development so far is a Trojan horse strategy: believers hope to reform categorical, problem-focused approaches from within. They continue to accept and promote the need for specialized funding in education, drug abuse, juvenile justice and employment — and they are hardly bashful about pursuing such funding — but they give lip service to the youth development paradigm. This, of course, maintains the infrastructure that promotes "silos" but it does keep youth development on the agenda.

Finance, Affordability and Equity

A critically important policy recommendation — and one that pulls the pieces of a system together — concerns affordability. We must find ways to assist those least able to afford after-school programming, weekend activities, and summer interventions. An especially important question concerns families with several children. Sliding fees, co-payments, endowments, and dedicated children tax schemes are policy issues that serve the entire community under the rubric of equity and fairness. (The Finance Project at www.financeproject.org is an excellent resource in this regard.) EMKF's *When School Is Out* (2000) notes that parent fees cover 80 percent of after-school care costs. While we do not know how many of America's 7.5 million latchkey children lack youth development opportunities because of cost, we expect the percentage is high.

Supplementing Government Dollars to Add Flexibility and Promote Access

Philanthropic and other private dollars can help people access youth programs and make up for rigidities in public financing. For example, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the earlier Jobs Training Partnership have rigidities that thwart serving high-risk groups. The following profile describes how private foundations might partner with government policymakers to address such concerns:

Urban Youth Development and Policy:
An Unfolding Story in Indy

Imagine a foundation-business-government-CBO partnership with the goal of creating a responsive, even seamless, system of services promoting employability and youth development for the hardest to serve: out-of-school youth. Such a system would build on referrals across network programs, access to the programs for anyone motivated to inquire, joint activities, youth worker training, collective examinations of policy issues, and so forth. Imagine a five-year gestation period for the network, with some missteps along the way, but overall progress toward the goal of creating a citywide system of programs, collaborative structures, and barrier-busting incentives aimed at assisting urban out-of-school youth.

This describes the Lilly Endowment's Youth Employment Development Network (YEDN). The results are not in, but the model is noteworthy for foundations interested in policy work.

The initiative started when Lilly turned over grant making for nine community-based youth programs to the Indianapolis Private Industry Council (IPIC). Lilly figured that since IPIC receives federal WIA funds, has close ties to employers, and serves as an arm of city government, it is an excellent choice as an intermediary and to help form a network among separate, often competitive, programs. IPIC had to fund these projects through RFPs, using both Lilly and federal dollars; monitor utilization and progress; and promote reform and networking among the agencies. Armed with special incentives (such as a multimillion dollar "rainy day" fund (vouchers) to help young people pay for rent, tuition, supplies, car repair, or other expenses that might prevent their participation in career-college-education-employability programs), IPIC has worked to make YEDN meaningful.

Urban and state policymakers should watch the YEDN experiment. The IPIC blends federal WIA and Lilly dollars and mixes a strategy of cost-reimbursable and performance based contracts to help network service providers achieve hoped-for outcomes. If it succeeds in creating a truly seamless system, new policies under their jurisdiction might be able to replace the private dollars used to launch the network. Another potential policy connection might occur when the network begins to monitor local, state and federal policies and advocate for changes in youth policies.

What does this profile suggest for foundations that seek to work on policy development?

■ Lilly has invested considerable resources working with a quasi-government agency (IPIC) (seen locally by some as an arm of the Mayor's office) that sets and manages policy (from the federal government) to develop an agent of change in urban youth employment and development.

■ The story suggests policy-relevant themes: the effectiveness of certain types of contracts and blending funds; use of vouchers/rainy day funds; and collaborative network structures with technical assistance from an intermediary. In particular, the Lilly YEDN helps local programs add flexibility to their work with out-of-school youth — flexibility often denied by federal policy requirements. In this sense alone, this is foundation work in the policy realm.

■ Some Network activities echo themes in this report: youth worker in-service training, community-wide information campaigns, and sectoral employment projects to launch careers in specific industries.
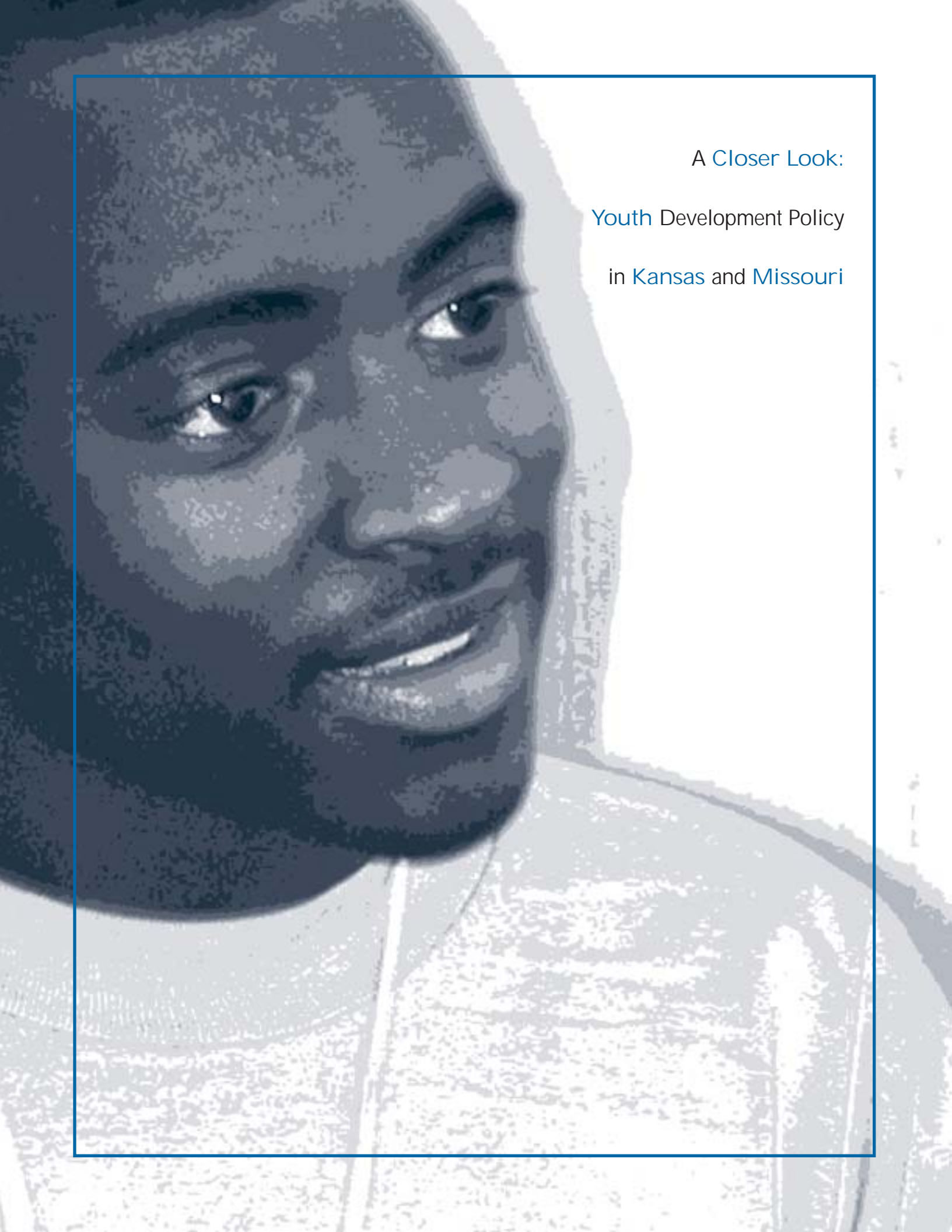
A **Closer Look:**

Youth Development Policy

in **Kansas** and **Missouri**

Introduction

In 1992 the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation's Youth Development Division adopted a strategic plan recommending a comprehensive, integrated, sequential, and sustained approach aimed at assisting American youth to lead productive lives. The plan's assumptions, vision, mission and strategies remain consistent with those promoted in the emerging field of youth development, as reviewed in the section, *What Is Youth Development.* Simply put, the *Strategic Plan for Youth Development* is an excellent point of reference and comparison to the themes discussed in this report. While our report does not assess the progress or success of the Foundation's investments, we share an observation or two.

Consider a 1999 report issued by the five Kansas City area United Way agencies. *Challenges We Face* summarized a three-phase needs assessment identifying factors affecting metropolitan-area human services delivery. This report and others are closely linked to the language and intent articulated in the Kauffman Foundation's *Strategic Plan.* Our interviewees noted that this United Way report shows the impact of the Foundation's investments. In fact, a Kansas City official stated that while much remains to be done, "due to leadership from EMKF and the KC Community Foundation, in 2000 there [is now] an infrastructure, shared vision, accepted strategies, and the public will to address the needs of children and youth in this area."

An important aspect of the *Strategic Plan* was its specificity. The plan articulated outcomes and performance targets to help determine if investments improved the lives of children, youth and their families. The outcomes and performance targets were intended to track progress, provide lessons learned, and identify the need for change should Foundation approaches fail to meet expectations. Of equal importance was the expectation that the strategic planning process would help the Foundation identify the best ways to provide resources to facilitate change in nonprofit organizations and urban schools.

Another important element in the *Strategic Plan* was the deliberate inclusion of parent education and family support, early childhood care and education, K-12 education, youth development, and community stabilization under a single umbrella of youth development. Many foundations, agencies, institutions, and funding streams were fragmenting childhood, families and communities into more categorical segments. The Kauffman Foundation recognized the wisdom and value of uniting them under a single, over-arching vision. The clustering is in keeping with this report's recommendations concerning the importance of learning from and working in policy development across allied fields.

The first of the *Strategic Plan's* outcomes focused on early care and education, the second on grades K-12 in- and out-of-school, and the third on community building. The end-user and partner targets focused on a specific number or percentage increase in the numbers of children, youth, and communities served; developing standards to insure high-quality services; professional workforce development; helping parents and community residents in their roles as a child's first and most important teachers; and governance and public policy.

The *Strategic Plan* also specified approaches, grant making strategies, and the operating style the Foundation and its partners would use to achieve the stated outcomes. The complementary Systems and Place-Based approaches covered birth through adulthood. The Systems Approach focused on changing and/or developing four systems: parent and family support; early childhood care and education; K-12 education; and youth development services. The Place Based Approach was embodied in three interlocking circles of economic development, human development, and community self-management within a single, large circle labeled "a healthy community." The three grant making strategies were capacity building, professional development, and advocacy. The operating style would bring the Foundation into a continuing partnership with key nonprofit groups that share mutually desired outcomes and intentionally cross traditional disciplinary boundaries to link effective approaches. After testing this infrastructure against our findings and recommendations, we see its enduring value.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Other funders should mark the Kauffman Foundation's Strategic Plan architecture. We also recommend adding the notions of *strengthening organizational capacity in public policy* and *giving social policy more of a voice* in the elements of the plan.

National Lessons Hold True
in Kansas and Missouri

Interviews with key leaders in the Kansas City region and throughout Missouri and Kansas, as well as a review of the literature, suggest that despite general acceptance and even adoption of some assumptions and strategies advanced by youth development advocates and "paradigm makers," *ambiguity and ambivalence nonetheless cloud the future of youth development policy in the region.*

We found a nearly perfect correspondence between themes expressed in the national review and in Kansas and Missouri interviews. For example, local people indicated that while the youth development concept has advanced in the last decade, it is an elastic term that can be all things to all people, and conceptual clarity is still a barrier. This paper's recommendations may help regional players go "from concept to policy."

Our regional interviews suggested the following:

- The region, like the nation, engages in rhetoric without addressing deeper policy issues and associated fiscal choices. Interviewees and many reports from the region assert *the need for "universal" youth development opportunities* — "every child needs to develop competence" — *but we did not hear concomitant notions of the costs and public policy issues of universalism or the need for a healthy debate comparing targeting with universalism.*

- *Regional confusion, like national confusion, reigns over whether youth development is a movement to reform traditional policies, a set of principles, after-school care, CBO youth development, school-based activities, or something else.* Some interviewees say that youth development should remain unique and separate from other social policies. Yet we heard that most youth development action is one and the same with traditional categorical programs (with the well-documented fragmentation at every level).

- While youth development is integrated into the regional landscape, the *change has been mostly in language, and the impact of the language shift is uneven.* In the region, as elsewhere in the U.S., some juvenile justice programs are now called youth development initiatives, but closer examination reveals no meaningful changes in philosophy, staffing or programming. (See Exhibit A.)

Evolution of Kansas Youth Development Policy,
with a Criminal Justice "Lens"

- **In the mid-1990s,** Kansas Governor Bill Graves (R) grows increasingly concerned about youth returning from jail better at crime than careers. He finds able partners in Albert Murray, Commissioner of Juvenile Justice, and then-representative David Adkins (R), now a state senator. The Governor and Commissioner take the lead on designing and implementing youth development policy and practice, with a juvenile justice orientation. The designated and de facto state-level leadership for youth development becomes juvenile justice.

- **1994:** Senate Bill 21 creates the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

- **The House Select Committee on Juvenile Crime,** with David Adkins as chair, holds extensive public hearings and prepares a report.

- **Senate Bill 312** creates the Kansas Youth Authority, seven appointees who will develop policy for the scope and functions of the newly created Juvenile Justice Authority. The JJA would oversee juvenile justice services, state and federal funds for juvenile offenders, and "prevention." This paves the way for an increased emphasis on youth development and prevention services.

- **1995:** Reports and recommendations are issued by (a) the House Select Committee on Juvenile Crime, (b) the Koch Crime Commission's Juvenile Justice Task Force, and (c) the Kansas Youth Authority. House Bill 2900 directs the Youth Authority to develop a strategy to transfer juvenile justice functions to the new JJA.

- **1996:** Governor convenes the first Kansas Juvenile Justice Summit.

- **1999:** House Bill 2092 abolishes the Youth Authority and establishes the Kansas Advisory Group on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency.

- **2000:** Connect Kansas created. Similar in design to the Missouri Family Investment Trust, it will be supported by existing funds from each state department. Each department will be represented by a department head and staff dedicated to implement the work of Connect Kansas. Connect Kansas has contracted with a University of Kansas team to provide support and technical assistance with local services for children and youth. Some departments such as Public Housing, Economic Development, and Health have been directed to identify federal and state funds that could be used to support youth development programs and services, with an emphasis on prevention. City/county-level "Prevention Coalitions" are being established to foster networking and identify service gaps at the local level. These coalitions will be advisory, with no fiduciary or administrative responsibilities. The University technical assistance team has begun to establish relationships with local entities and develop a single/joint application. This initiative begins to break, or at least spread out, from the juvenile justice angle.

- *We heard that youth development is under-financed and the field requires new federal, state and municipal funds — but few proposals were on the table.* We also learned when we tried to "follow the money" that no readily available studies document how much money is actually spent on youth development in the two states. Citizens for Missouri's Children, which did such an analysis in a 1996 Budget Watch publication, or another group, might consider an update.

- Even without examples of operational, effective systems, *the assumption is that existing bits and pieces can be cobbled together, re-constituted, re-conceptualized, and re-financed into a coherent, comprehensive, and effective system of services and supports for youth.* In a sense, this is the spirit of the Family Investment Trust of Missouri, coupled with specific goals and strong accountability language. YouthNet, a Kansas City intermediary organization, through its hard and effective community planning work, also attempts to bring all the system pieces together, at least around the planning table.

  An important example of this hopefulness about connecting resources is the story of how Kansas City, Missouri restructured before- and after-school funding. A Kauffman Foundation policy brief, *When School Is Out,* describes an inclusive planning process that led to creative blending of public and private funds (driven by a budget crisis precipitated by the end of a desegregation court order). The new plan brings in federal dollars (10% from Title 1, which the report notes is often available to communities but "left on the stump" due to lack of knowledge); School District in-kind support (19%); federal nutrition program (4%); parent fees (4%); state and federal child care subsidies (49%); and as yet unspecified funding (14%). This new scheme provided before- and after-school programs to 6,000 students and their families, and made child and youth development an ownership opportunity for new groups with deep community ties. The Foundation's role as a broker of change provides an example for other creative funders.

- *The growing connections between community development and youth development see rich expression in the region.* The Midwest Community Leadership Resource Center (a partnership of the Local Investment Commission, the Center for Nonprofit Leadership, Communities in Schools, and the Missouri Family Investment Trust) hosted a Fall 2000 conference in Kansas City for parents, neighbors, youth, staff, and community partners from the Jackson County Caring Communities initiative and local after-school activists. YouthNet's work links youth and community development. Another example is a national Coalition of Community Schools

(www.communityschools.org) meeting held in Kansas City to promote that movement. Finally, the Missouri Family Investment Trust has identified, as part of its training agenda, developing a new kind of community-based professional who could lead youth work. The challenge is to move from these connections to policy development so that these important initiatives have a chance at institutionalization and sustainability.

■ *In the region there was confusion, admiration, maybe jealousy, and lack of knowledge with regard to the allied fields of early childhood education and school reform.* We found it interesting that so many experienced individuals want to turn youth development into a vertical system governed by policies, legislation and national intermediaries, when some early childhood, K-12, family support and community development leaders are questioning the feasibility and efficiency of vertical infrastructures. *Put more neutrally, field and policy-building experience from these allied fields does not seem to be informing youth development in the region.*

In our interviews, we heard repeatedly that youth development must follow the path of early childhood education. Most interviewees and much of the regional literature described early childhood care and education as a model for youth development: "the field of early childhood education is a decade ahead of youth development" was a common comment. Schools and community development were also mentioned.

Interestingly, our regional interviewees remain adamant that "schools" and the "educational" system are not, and cannot be, the central core for the youth development system. This is another example of a critical policy development theme just below the surface for which only occasional forms of exchange and information exist.

Especially considering the Foundation's early lead in clustering allied fields, we see a number of grant making opportunities — such as supporting studies about the different paths and common developments of allied fields. As an illustration, the following factors, which are cited to explain early childhood's success in policy circles, could be tested: (a) demand (more adults need early child care), (b) welfare reform, (c) employers' realization that their workers perform better when they are confident that children are safe and well cared for, (d) great use of "brain research" and program impact evaluations, (e) strong, visible, and effective intermediaries, (f) excellent business, advocacy, foundation, and policymaker partnerships, (g) compelling research on the significance of compensation, and (h) the field's willingness to compromise, especially with schools, to embed early childhood in communities, schools and workplaces.

■ Confusion in the region on the placement of youth development on the continuum mirrors the national story. An internal report for a large national foundation states, "At best, American youth policy could be described as a complex mosaic. At worst, it is a poorly woven web that betrays this country's profound ambivalence toward both youth and social policy. *The precise location of current youth policy on this continuum* [emphasis added] is a debate that yields widespread disagreement and, ultimately, political impotence."

RECOMMENDATION: Funders should support regional policy strategy exploring the pre-K to graduation continuum and youth development's place on it. Without such an effort, youth advocates will continue to send contradictory signals to policymakers, rendering futile any attempt to move the region forward.

PROFILE

A Promising Example
of Linking Youth Development
to Allied Fields

Through a collaborative involving the Governor's office, legislators, foundations, local leaders, public agencies, and local and statewide organizations, Kansas is integrating several statewide initiatives into a campaign to "Create an Environment that Puts Children First." The intention is to increase awareness and change how adults interact with children and youth. The well-financed project, seen as a 15-year effort, is also aimed at supporting the impact of good role models and healthy relationships. Seventeen Kansas communities will have technical assistance, support and incentives to "change how adults interact everyday with children." Our regional interviewees were clear that the campaign echoed youth development jargon — for example, to get adults to understand the importance of identifying assets rather than deficits. It would be desirable to tie this campaign to specific policy opportunities.

We turn now to other themes from our regional review:

Families and Youth Development

With a few important exceptions, most regional interviewees rarely if ever mentioned parents or families as a significant factor in youth development. The aforementioned LINC/Midwest Community Leadership Center conference focused on the parental role, and many YouthNet activities bring in parents (including a publication that helps parents identify promising youth programs). Many interviewees, however, stressed the need to "protect" youth from the family's influence. This is interesting, since early childhood education, K-12 education, and health and human service providers have embraced service provider-parent partnerships. Where in regional youth development are initiatives designed to build on family strengths and assets? This is a point of interest for many U.S. foundations, some with strong ideological positions and others just trying to connect the dots through thoughtful, systematic approaches. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's 22-site Making Connections efforts will undoubtedly address the youth development-family strengthening connection.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundations should support policies that strengthen this surprisingly weak youth development-family connection.

As an example, America's large summer job and career orientation program for youth — serving 600,000 to 1 million youth each summer — is largely disconnected from parents and family involvement. What an opportunity for grant makers to work on the family front, with policymakers and with young people truly in need.

Local Elected Officials and Youth Development

Exciting things are happening in local youth development policy around the country. More should be happening in Missouri and Kansas communities. The route is through local elected leadership. These officials are among the first to note the need for youth development services. Foundations interested in reaching this constituency might consider the National League of Cities' new Institute on Youth, Education, and Families. This group is in an excellent position to monitor local youth policy developments and initiate change strategies. Its publication, *City Voices, Children's Needs* (2000), reports on interviews with 29 local elected officials from 28 cities. Many share a concern about youth violence; most see youth development as the antidote.

In Kansas City, Missouri, the Promise Project (a joint effort of Kansas City Consensus and the Junior League) produces the well-respected Youth Summit. YouthNet also interfaces with city officials. Together these groups are trying to create a youth empowerment movement in the city. The effort aims to channel youthful energy to community planning, connect youth development to the Kansas City Focus strategic planning process, and tie policy reform to program standards.

Following are a few notable examples of initiatives across the country:

- The Beacons model in New York City spread throughout that city as a matter of public policy and excellent work by an intermediary.

- The LA Best program for elementary school youth spread across Los Angeles as a matter of policy.

- Seattle moved from one Youth Commission to youth committees in nearly every city agency that works with youth.

- Little Rock hired a full-time staff person to work on youth issues and promote youth empowerment, with city officials' cooperation.

- Boston's youth development plan *(Everyone Is Out There for Youth)* includes specific policy innovations, building on the success of Operation Cease Fire, which decreased youth homicide. People are highly encouraged about the effects of the new 36-member Youth Council. (The National League of Cities also helped cities form youth councils. Replication videos are available for those interested in this mechanism).

Thinking Regionally

According to U.S. Census data, transience statistics in the Kansas City metropolitan area closely resemble national statistics. Overall, 16.3 percent of families move each year, most to a new home in the same county. In 1995-96, nearly two-thirds of families who moved made this type of "local" move. Of the remaining third, more than half moved between counties and the remainder changed states. White families move less frequently than African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asians. Renters of all races move much more often than homeowners: one in every three families in renter-occupied housing moved in the previous year, compared with only one in 12 families in owner-occupied housing.

Regional youth development people largely ignore these mobility patterns, but policymakers need to structure appropriate responses. For example, continuous youth development programming (for a year or more) works better than "light touch" programming; but young people's transience makes

continuous service very difficult. Programs generally have not networked; one program's success with a young person is ignored in another community. Newly relocated parents don't know where to call for youth development services to replace the programs their children were in previously. Added to this are transportation issues, the latter hardly mentioned at all by youth development policymakers in published reports and interviews. Interviewees suggested a number of strategies for addressing transience, including cross-program referrals and toll free information and referral services.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Grant making needs to conform to and think in terms of local and regional conditions and contexts. For example, the Foundation is well positioned to develop with municipal, county, and state planners, specific strategies related to transience and transportation, especially in rural Kansas and Missouri.

Develop Local Competence to Monitor, Influence and Reform Policy

Most regional respondents were *unfamiliar with the work of national policy intermediaries.* Nor were they aware of local or state organizations in Missouri or Kansas that specifically advocated for youth development policy — with the exceptions of regional intermediary LINC (an innovation that has caught the attention of visitors from across the U.S. and is noted especially for stimulating the use of Missouri state funds for after-school care) and YouthNet (see Profile on page 63). The area is fortunate to be home to these organizations; but in youth development policy, respondents believe more expertise is needed in the region. Executives from the premier Kansas and Missouri child advocacy groups told us that they had the resources to explore early childhood policies, funding, and practices, but not to expand these activities to include older children and youth. Local universities are rich resources, but as we understand it, no single policy shop stands out as expert in monitoring and promoting youth development policy in the region. Our interviewees recognized national individuals and organizations but were not aware of or engaged in national-level advocacy and policy work. In fact, they often talked about the "disconnect" between national intermediaries and where the "rubber meets the road" in the local community. A common comment was that national policy "is important but really has little to do with my organization or my work."

A major Kansas City youth service provider said, "Most of us in youth development have no policy orientation. The national youth development experts are more cohesive, cogent, organized; but at the local and state level the focus is mostly on delivery of services, not policies." Another stated,

"We are overwhelmed. We can't even determine all of the existing youth services. If we can't make a list, how can we connect and collaborate — much less organize around advocacy?"

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundations should support local policy competence and develop a cadre of policy-sophisticated leaders through such mechanisms as in-service and graduate level youth policy training, establishing new policy entities, and encouraging workers and leaders to take time away from the local scene to re-tool.

PROFILE

Doing Policy Work:
YouthNet's Phasing Approach

YouthNet of Kansas City has a bright and clear sense of how and when to do policy work. They see pre-conditions or steps in a sequence that make "doing" policy work more likely to succeed.

YouthNet's mission is to build a cohesive and inclusive citywide youth-serving system. To achieve this mission, they believe that: (a) all youth programs must work together to identify common standards, (b) there must be effective technical assistance and capacity-building strategies, (c) external monitoring is necessary, (d) joint programming and collaboration to economize on efforts is an important step, and (e) programs working together in a consortium will be especially well positioned to identify as a team the systemic policy barriers that make their work difficult.

YouthNet believes that policy must bubble up from system building and collaboration. Accordingly, the organization has obtained commitments from 17 programs in the region to a multi-year examination and approval of a set of standards. This stage should lead to a more robust consortium member role in policy monitoring, advocacy, reform and development.

Move Promising Local Initiatives
to Scale Through the Policy Realm

Far too often, exciting and effective local investments are not sequenced smoothly into policy. One example is Missouri's Family Investment Trust/ Caring Communities initiative. Evaluations have been done; the program of systems-change and tangible goals has been monitored. But who has looked at the youth development angle to see what works and examined the policy implications for further state-level or urban policy work?

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Foundations should develop policymaker and foundation capacity to identify promising local practices and explore diffusion, replication, and institutionalization through relevant policy strategies.

The following three examples appear promising — at least from the vantagepoint of New England writers! — but with apparent weak links to policy in the sense of monitoring developments and discussing their potential expansion. (We make no claims about proven effectiveness.)

Example 1: Squash It

The Kansas City Partnership for Children initiated "Squash it!", a Harvard University School of Public Health program to teach young people alternatives to violence. To reinforce the program message, Kansas City youth and adult allies opened 30 Kansas City area schools for safe after-hours activities; prepared youth trainers to teach conflict resolution; and negotiated job opportunities for youth. The campaign used the "Squash It" slogan and a modified time-out hand signal. The program's impact was measured using the Safety and Security outcomes, including rates of violent crime and child abuse and neglect. A respondent said: "From our work in this area we launched YouthFriends, opened schools before and after school hours, and started a summer jobs program." Squash It! may not have succeeded in a formal evaluation sense, according to our interviews, but the outgrowths — YouthFriends and non-school programming — did: "We have approximately 7000 adults working as mentors with 15,000 young people; and we have many before- and after-school programs operating today as a result of Squash It!" To our knowledge, Squash It! was not recognized in further state policy but did influence, in part, Missouri's 21st Century Schools Initiative.

Example 2: 21st Century Schools

Missouri now has 17 21st Century Community Learning School sites (as of 2000-2001) receiving U.S. Department of Education funds and technical assistance and support from the National Community Education Center. The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation also provides training for states. The 21st

Century Schools differ in important ways from Squash It! and earlier community education efforts. To maintain funding, they must demonstrate positive impact on student performance (using both U.S. and Missouri academic standards) and promote parent engagement, education and training. While we are not fully up to date, we ask whether the state policy link is all it could or should be.

Example 3: Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities

Kansas City; **Wichita County, Kan.**; **St. Louis**; and **East Prairie, Mo.**, were selected as Enterprise Communities. Kansas City was the only site in the two states designated as an Enhanced Enterprise Community, which brings not only distinction but also additional funds.

Youth development opportunities are not absent from the Kansas and Missouri EZ/EC community. In 2000, Wyandotte County received three grants from the Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority to support YouthFriends (an urban mentoring initiative), HECHO Family Outreach and Support Project (to increase Latino children's success in early childhood programs through high school and the number of Latinos living in safe, supportive families), and Heart of America Family Services (to prevent alcohol and substance abuse, delinquency, and truancy, and improve school performance for youth living in public housing). In addition, HUD grants to local governments, housing authorities, and nonprofit groups help train high school dropouts to build and renovate low-income housing and support themselves as construction workers, and YouthBuild models exist (e.g., the St. Louis Youth Education and Health program).

Even more impressively, Lowell, Massachusetts, San Francisco, and a few other sites have developed outstanding strategies for leveraging EZ/ECs to create better policies and services for children and youth. HUD lists many EZ/EC youth accomplishments: 212 youth development programs serving 25,448 youth, 78 educational facilities built or upgraded, and 130 computer learning centers established or upgraded.

With these vignettes as backdrop, we get to the main question: Who in the state is monitoring the policy adoption possibilities concerning the youth development elements of these largely federally supported initiatives? Who is focused on renewed federal authorization? A national EZ/EC program leader, when asked about the youth development field's local, state, or national level involvement, stated: "It was and is miniscule." Is this the result the region wants or deserves? Certainly the national intermediaries understand that the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative's future is contained in the forthcoming ESEA reauthorization; but who will help Kansas and Missouri understand and apply the local lens on these potential policy developments? Who will help with taking the next policy step in EZ/ECs?

The Nuts and Bolts of State Regulation:
The Role of "Micro" Policies

In Kansas and Missouri, our interviews and review of materials revealed "micro" policies that influence the unfolding of comprehensive youth development policy in the area.

■ Tension often exists between the need to assure child welfare and safety and allowing community organizations (which often have the weakest ability to meet "micro" policies such as zoning, health, and safety) to meet the needs of their youth.

■ Regulatory hurdles that demand capital improvements of aging facilities further decrease the limited resources of urban churches and other community organizations.

■ Grant eligibility and program priorities, established by federal, state, and even private agencies, are often blind to a community's regulatory topography.

■ A clear example of the nuts and bolts of state and county involvement in youth development is the story of the discovery that the same statutes and regulations apply to summer youth programs and Kansas' child care programs. (This report's principal author told this story in an opinion editorial in the national trade newspaper, *Youth Today,* which builds on Davis' (2000) excellent account.) Currently, one set of rules fits all youth programs — summer, after school, tutorial, community-based, sports-related camps, and others — regardless of their seasonality or partial-day characteristics. However, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, which administers these regulations, is revising the standards to accommodate differences between school-aged programs and pre-school programs. The Kauffman Foundation helped to convene the players to get over the bottlenecks and diminish the effect of the short-term crises created by enforcing the rules.

■ Small organizations often misunderstand municipal and county enforcement structures. For example, the application process to establish youth programs in Wyandotte County involves several municipal and county structures, including zoning permits, building inspections, fire safety, business licensing, and child care licensing. The bureaucratic requirements are time consuming and often overseen by separate, cumbersome, and rarely applicant-friendly administrative entities. Wyandotte County community meetings resulted in the following recommendations, which are likely to apply to many other communities:

- Identify funding sources to help organizations make necessary facility modifications in compliance with regulations.

- Provide quarterly workshops to meet these developing programs' training needs.

- Offer ongoing technical assistance for program planners.

- Create a wide distribution of state policies including a "decision tree" for determining licensure eligibility.

- Establish more user-friendly municipal-level processes among the departments that handle applications.

- Convene a team to help identify key regulatory obstacles for implementing summer youth programs and short-term after-school activities.

RECOMMENDATION: Foundations should facilitate and promote progress in "micro" policy that helps to address specific local issues with great significance for local programs.

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Policy Scan for Grantmakers:
A Learning Tool From the Brandeis Center
for Youth and Communities

The intent of this document is to assist grant makers to assess and enhance their readiness to do policy work in youth development. It focuses on federal policy but may help with work in state and local policy as well.

I. The State of National Youth Policy: Understanding the Problem

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? How do they compare with one another? To what extent have these topics been discussed in foundation circles with staff and board members?

Youth-associated speakers at national conferences often lament, "America has no youth policy." They mention the following problems, among others:

- Inappropriate federal youth policies
- Inadequate scale of current policies
- Inconsistent or otherwise problematic implementation of current policies
- Fragmentation of policies across federal agencies and departments. Different agencies typically pursue "problem-based" strategies growing out of their respective missions (for example, one HUD initiative is concerned with the behavior of youth living in housing projects; another promotes the development of housing construction skills).
- Lack of attention to and debate about the youth development field compared with some other social welfare fields, such as education and health care, for the following reasons (among others):
  - The fact that "youth industry" is only a small part of the nation's GNP
  - Poor communication by those involved with youth development
  - Lack of shared vision and coordination in the youth development field
  - Belief that youth problems solve themselves as the kids mature
  - Belief that youth matters are best left to families
  - Belief that nothing works
  - Policy approaches based on problems rather than "youth development" (i.e., building on youths' strengths and assets)

II. Understanding the Solutions Proposed

Have you debated or familiarized yourself with the following proposals to address youth policy concerns?

- Appoint a national czar to pull all the youth-serving players together
- Strengthen the individual ("fragmented") policy areas we now have and work toward more comprehensiveness
- Implement "targeting within universalism." — youth policy that sounds universalistic (potentially serves all youth) but is really targeted to poor communities or people
- Develop a new, comprehensive national youth policy (see the pending Younger American's Act and related proposals)
- Emphasize state rather than federal policies.

III. The Younger American's Act

How familiar are you with the Younger American's Act currently being drafted by a consortium of youth-serving organizations? The draft of the YAA is available at www.nydic.org. Which provisions do you like most? Which provisions do you like least?

The purpose of the Younger American's Act is "to mobilize American communities to assure all youth access to the competencies and character development they need to be fully prepared as adults and effective citizens." To what extent do you think "framing" the policy in these terms (especially "character development") is effective and wise? How would you frame those proposals?

How familiar are you with the history of the following two attempts to promote a more cohesive national youth policy?

- The 1988-89 Young Americans Act (passed but never implemented due to lack of federal funding).
- A Youth Development Block Grant (attempted in 1994-95)

IV. Major youth policy themes

The following is a list of major themes that youth policies do or could address. To what extent are you familiar with these themes? To what extent is your organization involved in addressing these themes? We include a few examples illustrating possible foundation involvement. Would these make a useful discussion piece for board retreats and other strategy-setting forums?

Theme 1: *Focusing on youth workers*

    a. Formal graduate and pre-service education for youth workers

    b. In-service education for youth workers

    c. Salaries and benefits for youth workers

    d. Credentialing for youth workers

    e. Core competencies for youth workers

    f. Turnover rate for youth workers

Theme 2: *Improving youth programs*

    g. Licensing and regulation of youth programs

    h. Facilities and transportation for youth programs

    i. Youth program designs and relationships to past evaluations

    j. Youth program accountability (for example, measurement outcomes, evaluations) and associated contracting methods

    k. Youth program management support (for example, MIS, technical assistance, coaching)

    l. Youth program practices (for example, outreach, referral, assessment, retention, follow-up)

    m. Youth program populations (for example, ethnic, under-served, "at-risk")

    n. Youth program eligibility

Theme 3: *Considering the nexus of youth and community*

    o. Community development and youth development nexus

    p. Comprehensive community-based planning

    q. Youth voices and empowerment

Theme 4: *Enhancing funding and growth*

    r. Collaborations and partnerships at the federal, state, local, and business levels

    s. Youth program funding schemes (for example, linkage agreements, new local dedicated taxes, longer grant periods)

    t. Youth programs and technology

    u. Blending funding streams at the local level

Theme 5: *Addressing particular challenges for youth, such as the following:*

    v. Youth employment and training

    w. Youth and the digital divide

    x. Youth literacy

    y. Teen pregnancy

    z. Youth violence and delinquency

    cc. Runaway youth and homelessness

    ii. Youth health and safety

Theme 6: *Expanding opportunities for growth of youth programs in the following promising areas:*

     aa. Youth community service and service learning

     bb. Youth conservation and environment programs

     cc. Mentoring for youth and youth-adult relationships

     dd. Higher education awareness and access

     ee. Residential initiatives for youth

     ff. Youth entrepreneurship

     gg. Youth recreation, arts, and culture

     hh. Interpersonal skills and leadership development

     ii. Youth clubs and centers

     jj. Youth networks, fellowships and learning groups

V. Grant maker Involvement in Building Local Political Capacity

One way to strengthen youth policy is to assist youth-serving organizations to mobilize and contribute to policy monitoring and advocacy. These organizations face many barriers to doing so, however, including lack of expertise, funding, or time; and not making such activities an organizational priority. Which of the following forms of policy-related mobilization by local, state, and regional programs might your foundation be interested in supporting? Helping programs to:

    A. Visit elected officials

    B. Give testimony

    C. Set up site visits to increase visibility of good programs

    D. Bring important people to the community

    E. Write letters to policymakers

    F. Learn how a bill becomes law

    G. Build congressional relationships

    H. Do "community organizing training 101"

    I. Get positive media coverage of the issues

    J. Cultivate community allies

    K. Organize and mobilize members of the local community

    L. Broaden the base of support

    M. Build issue-based coalitions

    N. Serve on external committees

    O. Influence the timing and targets of advocacy efforts

    P. Access credible information

    Q. Learn and do lobbying

    R. Hire lobbyists

    S. Draft legislation

T. Communicate about policy

U. Learn advocacy tips of the trade

Other grant maker strategies include supporting the following. Have these been discussed and debated?

a. On-site consultation and technical assistance

b. Training sessions

c. Documents and materials development

d. Clearinghouses, Web sites and other technology tools

VI. The Big Four: Access, Availability, Affordability, and Sustainability

Policies address access, availability, affordability, and sustainability. When you consider new, expanded, or reformed youth policies, how should each of these policy goals be addressed? Discuss and formulate strategies for each.

- Access
- Availability
- Affordability
- Sustainability

VII. The Three Big Chunks

American youth policy is often divided into 3 large pieces:

- School reform
- Out-of-school youth
- Programs during non-school hours

When it comes to developing new policies, do these divisions work for you? If not, what would you change? What are the deficits? Where would your organization like to focus?

Age Doesn't Count in American Youth Policy:
Age Eligibility in Various Federal Youth Policies

PURE AGE TARGETING

Ages 0-21	Ages 3-21	Ages 10-16	Ages 10-19	Ages 10-22	Ages 10-24
Ages 12-19	Under age 13	Ages 14-22	Ages 15-18	Under age 18	Ages 16-21
Ages 16-24	Ages 16 & older				

BY SCHOOL STATUS

Kindergarten through grade 12

Pre-kindergarten through grade 12

Elementary and school-age children

Dropouts or those at risk of dropping out

High school students through
    college students

OTHER GROUPINGS

Under age 18,
    defined as a special needs youth

Under age 21, living with a relative

Teen parents

Young minority males

Teen mothers

Ages 5-20, at risk for substance abuse

Women 15-44, at risk for substance abuse

Ages 10-19, at risk for substance abuse

Child at risk of placement in foster care

Public housing youths

Volunteers over age 16

Parents with children under age 21

Missing children

Puerto Rico and its youth

Work/study students, college-age

Women ages 15-44

Mother over age 12 and child

Homeless children

Disadvantaged youths ages 16-21

Low-income youths, ages 14-21

Determined by state guidelines

Economically disadvantaged,
    unemployed youths

BY GEOGRAPHY

Under age 18 living in a designated area

Under age 21 living in a designated area

Under age 24 living in a designated area

RISK STATUS

At-risk youth

At-risk, under age 18

At-risk, school-age youth

NO FORMAL TARGETING

but focus is on ages 0-19

but focus is on ages 0-21

but focus is on teen parents

but focus is on ages 1-17

but focus is on adolescent women

but focus is on young people with AIDS

but focus is on the homeless

but focus is on youth substance abusers

but focus is on economically
    disadvantaged youth

but focus is on substance abusers
    between ages 12-17

but focus is on at-risk children
    whose parents are at-risk
    of contracting HIV/AIDS

Source: Federal Programs Reviewed
by the Brandeis University
Early Adolescent Policy Audit

Working the Numbers:
The Implications of the Youth Development Paradigm
for Youth Development Policy —
A Think Piece for Discussion

A comprehensive approach to youth development programming requires public and private sector commitment to support and nurture the ongoing growth process in which all youth attempt to (1) meet their basic personal and social needs — to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, and be spiritually grounded, and (2) build skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute to their daily lives.[11]

Studies show that most risky youth behavior takes place after the last school bell rings and before parents get home from work. Youth development programming needs to engage adolescents in this unstructured time. While some schools provide (or contract with community groups to provide) structured after-school programs, it is not realistic to rely solely on schools to provide these vital supports. The following section therefore examines the cost of providing various populations of youth in the U.S., Kansas, and Missouri, ages 10 through 19, with 9 hours a week of programming in a community-based setting.[12] Since a universal approach is expensive, we also calculate the cost of programming for the 25 percent of youth who are considered at some risk of unhealthy behavior, and for the 10 percent who are most at risk. These estimates are derived from a number of studies (see Endnote 2).

What Policy and Funding Streams Could Do: Costs of A Youth Development System.[13] Newman et al. (2000) estimate that the average cost of providing children in after school and youth development programs with "developmental opportunities and supports" is $2.55 per hour per child.[14] Brandeis' evaluation of the Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP) found that comprehensive youth development programs for high school students would cost $2.77 per hour per youth, including the extensive outreach needed to help enrollees stick with programs long enough for the programs to have an impact. Since youth development focuses on adolescents, a hard-to-engage group even before considering "at-risk" markers, we base our calculations on the $2.77 figure. The remarkable similarity of the QOP and Newman et al. figures gives us confidence in this number. (The QOP study included costs beyond the $2.77 for stipends to give young people a participation incentive. Since this is often considered unorthodox, we omit it).

Assuming that a good youth development program provides 9 hours a week of programming — far more than most programs today — a comprehensive strategy would include 468 hours of programming per year. For simplicity, we calculate costs based on 500 hours, a round number that could figure prominently in advocacy campaigns. At $2.77 per hour, youth development would cost $1,385 per child per year, and the total bill for a national universal youth development system for kids ages 10 to 19 would be $54.4 billion. This figure is significantly reduced to $13.6 billion if programming is targeted to 25 percent of adolescents, and to $5.4 billion when limited to the highest risk group (10 percent).

UNITED STATES		
	# of youth (ages 10-19)[15]	TOTAL COST
Universal	39,296,407	$54,425,523,695
25% of youth	9,824,102	13,606,380,924
10% of youth	3,929,641	5,442,552,369

Statewide program costs also vary according to the targeting strategy. Kansas costs would be half a billion dollars for a universal program, $143 million for 25 percent of youth, and $57 million for 10 percent.

KANSAS		
	# of youth (ages 10-19)[15]	TOTAL COST
Universal	413,452	$572,631,020
25% of youth	103,363	143,157,755
10% of youth	41,345	57,263,102

In Missouri, with almost double the number of children ages 10 to 19, programming will cost twice as much. A universal program will cost $1.1 billion, while a targeted system serving 25 percent or 10 percent will cost $282 million and $112 million respectively.

MISSOURI		
	# of youth (ages 10-19)[15]	TOTAL COST
Universal	814,651	$1,128,291,635
25% of youth	203,663	282,072,909
10% of youth	81,465	112,829,164

A Think Piece: Who Would Pay for a Comprehensive Youth Development System? The scale of a comprehensive youth development approach requires federal, state, and local investment, including school districts, parents, and philanthropic organizations. Our assumptions on each group's share of financing seem reasonable to us, but they could and should be tested in real world applications and "what if" planning exercises.

The federal government is unlikely to spend more than 7 percent of the cost of youth development programming regardless of whether the strategy is universal or highly targeted, since 7 percent is the federal share of spending on public education. (It also approximates a Kansas City study on after-school care costs.) School districts could be expected to pay about 10 percent of program costs, with the understanding that other issues, from school construction to disability inclusion, will likely take precedence in budgeting. Parents too could contribute in a mix of sliding fee scales and the like. We peg this contribution, based on the Kansas City study, at 4 percent. This leaves other local (city/county) sources, philanthropic giving, and state funding to make up the rest. A reasonable guess is that city/county funding would comprise another 10 percent (matching the investment of the local school district), philanthropy 3 percent, and state funding, the lion's share: 66 percent.

The following charts illustrate what funding could look like in Kansas and Missouri for both universal and targeted programming.

THE COST OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN KANSAS:				
Source	% of funds	Programming targeted to:		
		UNIVERSAL	25%	10%
Federal	7%	$40,084,171	$10,021,043	$4,008,477
State	66%	377,936,473	94,484,118	37,793,647
School District	10%	57,263,102	14,315,776	5,726,310
Parents	4%	22,890,524	5,726,310	2,290,524
Other local	10%	57,263,102	14,315,775	5,726,310
Philanthropy	3%	17,178,931	4,294,733	1,717,893
TOTAL		$572,631,020	$143,157,755	$57,263,102

THE COST OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN MISSOURI:				
Source	% of funds	Programming targeted to:		
		UNIVERSAL	25%	10%
Federal	7%	78,980414	19,745,104	$7,898,041
State	66%	744,672,479	186,168,120	74,467,248
School District	10%	112,829,163	28,207,291	11,282,916
Parents	4%	45,131,665	11,282,916	4,513,167
Other local	10%	112,829,163	28,207,291	11,282,916
Philanthropy	3%	33,848,749	8,462,187	3,384,875
TOTAL		$1,128,291,635	$282,072,909	$112,829,163

Do we fall short? While the amount needed to provide a comprehensive program looks daunting, each state already has funds that can act as a base for a program budgets. A big problem in calculating the amount needed for youth development programs, however, is that we cannot accurately determine how much is currently being spent or is coming into states. This is especially true

when looking at money spent only on adolescents. As noted elsewhere in this report, those who try to "follow the money" in youth development disagree about what age groups to consider and often include all programs designed for children and families. Neither do we have a formal definition to determine which policies are *youth development* rather than just *youth* programs.

State funds. In four states with new youth development legislation (page 31), state funding would average about $40 per child. If we assume a similar funding pattern in Kansas, the state contribution for a universal program would be $16,538,080, a far cry from the $377,936,473 calculated above. Similarly, we could expect a state contribution of $4,134,520 for programming targeted at 25% of youth, and $1,653,808 for the highest risk group. State funding in Missouri would also be only a fraction of the cost needed for a comprehensive program, providing $32,586,040, $8,146,510 and $3,258,604 respectively.

Requiring such a large portion of the money from states is difficult, especially in a universally targeted program. It seems clear, then, that advocacy is needed to encourage increased funding across the board (decreasing the state share while raising the costs for school districts and other local sources); or communities need to use a highly targeted approach to serve only the most at-risk youth; or both are needed.

Federal funds. Estimates of the size and scope of current federal spending range from $6.7 billion for 13 programs for adolescents and 23 programs that "may include services for adolescents" to $177.1 billion for 40 programs.[16] Using a recent Congressional Research Service report, we estimate that current spending is around $9.9 billion for 28 federal programs targeted primarily to adolescents (excluding federal spending for education). While not all of these funds could be appropriately applied to youth development services, we estimate (for discussion sake) that about 40 percent of the federal funds are being used for programs that meet general youth development guidelines. Therefore, of the $9.9 billion being spent on adolescents, we could apply $3.96 billion towards our national youth development budget.

If the $3.96 billion were divided equally among the 39,296,407 kids ages 10-19 in the U.S., federal spending would be about $100 per child. Spending would be $403 per child divided among 25 percent of youth, and $1,008 for each of the youths in the highest-risk group. In Kansas, the federal contribution to youth development programming on this basis would be about $41,664,621, and in Missouri, federal spending would equal $82,094,476. Depending upon the extent of targeting in Kansas and Missouri, even a conservative estimate of current federal spending could be a significant source of funds for programming.

We projected a universal youth development budget in Kansas of $572 million, of which we would expect the federal government to contribute just over $40 million. Our estimate of current federal spending in Kansas was roughly equal to this amount at $41 million. It seems probable then, that universal programming would not require additional federal spending. We had also anticipated, however, that the state's share of the funding may exceed the amount that they are willing to allocate. While state spending will certainly fluctuate from state to state, a more targeted youth development approach would reduce the amount that the state and/or other funders would be expected to spend. The $40 million in federal funds could be applied to the $143 million budget for programs serving 25 percent of teens, or make up more than two-thirds of the $57 million program costs for serving high risk youth.

The same funding pattern can be applied to youth development in Missouri, where we determined current federal spending to be around $82 million. This amount exceeds the federal share for a universal program ($78.9 million of the $1.1 billion budget). Again, using a more targeted approach, federal funds could be used to reduce the state (or school district, local, parent, philanthropic) portion of the $282 million budget for 25 percent of youth, or the $112 million to serve 10 percent of youth.

Conclusion. A comprehensive youth development strategy requires federal, state, and local commitment by public and private entities. Current federal and state funding on youth development is a starting point for the system we have projected. While all children would benefit from youth development programming, selective targeting decreases program costs and reduces the amount that each funder is expected to contribute. Along with the financial implications of a targeted youth development policy, targeting could also be described as a more efficient policy approach.

> **RECOMMENDATION:** Before we can hope that our investments in youth development will give adolescents the confidence, support, and skills they need to have happy, healthy and productive lives, we need to: (a) get real about the potential costs of comprehensive youth development policies, (b) debate eligibility standards without the usual rhetoric, and (c) identify appropriate funding sources and understand each source's share of the financing. This analytic work goes to the heart of youth development policy planning. The preceding figures are a starting point for foundations and others who might support detailed fiscal planning exercises and alternative plans.

Federal Youth Development
Funding Streams

Notable federal youth development funding streams include DHHS State Youth Development Collaborative Project grants to states (about $120,000 each: does this meager funding reflect the federal government's seriousness about state level policy development?); DOL's Youth Opportunity Grants (36 sites in the most recent round); HUD's YouthBuild (for older, typically out-of-school youth facing barriers to employability); DEd's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (one area of youth development that has enjoyed expansion) and GEAR-UP (mentoring); DoJ's JUMP (juvenile mentoring program) and Juvenile Justice-Title V-Prevention; and Learn and Serve America and National Service in the Corporation for National and Community Service. The large 4-H program receives funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Extension Service and should be included among federally supported youth development programs, along with the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, the Chaffee Foster Care Independence Act, and the DHHS National Sports Program. One might also include School-to-Work, summer jobs, Job Corps, Empowerment Zones, and Enterprise Communities; DEd substance abuse prevention; some child welfare services; Safe Schools; and largely untapped and not well understood youth development opportunities in TANF, WIA, and Welfare to Work (mostly for teen parents or youth at-risk).

> **RECOMMENDATION:** A suitable grant making initiative could promote linkages between WIA and TANF and youth development programming. See the August 1999 issue of the Welfare Information Clearinghouse newsletter, Welfare Issues, on financing out-of-school time programs using TANF/CCDF Child Development Funds or the January 2000 Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) report, "Tapping TANF for Youth."

Estimates of total federal dollars spent on youth range widely ($6.7 billion, $40.0 billion, $54.4 billion, $119.6 billion, $144.0 billion, $177 billion, and $245.3 billion), as Newman et al. (2000) show. In fact, imprecision and different estimation techniques illustrate graphically the poverty of the youth development policy field. This situation would be embarrassing in other fields and cries out for a foundation-supported national youth development budget project. No group has successfully enumerated the various federal programs' eligibility criteria, compared universalistic to targeted goals, or addressed the significant administrative costs as the funds trickle down. No one has looked

at which states get youth development dollars. Most importantly, each list of programs varies by the authors' definition of youth or youth development initiatives. Some, for example, include nutrition, while others focus on youth action programs. This mess is something of a scandal and shows the immaturity of the policy field itself.

Newman et al. conclude that the programs are fragmented, mostly serving categorical groups, and are crisis-oriented rather than "youth development" oriented. The lack of knowledge about federal programs offers obvious opportunities for foundations interested in the policy arena. The field needs a common set of definitions, a youth budget, and an analysis of spending, eligibility, youth development principles, administrative dollars, and who gets what.

■ ENDNOTES ■

1 IRS rules on nonprofits and lobbying offer more legal leeway than many foundations realize and should not stand as a barrier to policy work. For a good review, see "Strategies for Shaping Public Policy: A Guide for Health Funders" (Grantmakers in Health, 1999, Washington, D.C.), which also provides a bibliography on these issues and an overview of the policy work categories mentioned.

2 Estimates of the at-risk population vary depending on the ages covered and risk indicators used. An often-cited statistic is that 9.2 million to 15.8 million American children are considered at-risk (ChildTrends). In 1990, 23% of American children ages 5-17 (10 million children) lived in poor neighborhoods (census tracts in which 20% or more of residents lived in poor families). One in twenty (5%) children ages 5-17 live in very poor neighborhoods (where 40% or more people are poor). Another suggestion of the scope of need is the 7.5 million children ages 5-14 who are on their own after school. A final example is a Low-Risk Cumulative Index that measures avoidance of school suspension/expulsion, sexual intercourse, and use of illicit drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. By their 15th birthday, 32% of American youth have not avoided two or more of these indicators.

3 Portions of this and the next few sections are drawn directly from Hahn and Raley (1998), Youth Development: A Field in the Making, available from the National Collaboration for Youth, Washington, D.C. Hahn alone is responsible for major changes in the present paper.

4 Some analysts include school-based enrichment services in youth development frameworks. A well-known example is the Beacons initiative in New York City and replicated sites across the country in which community-based organizations deliver youth services in schools during afternoons, weekends, and evenings. Other writers define youth development as largely non-school based. When including schools, most analysts restrict their definition to enrichment and second chance programming, rather than academic instruction. Put differently, teachers are regarded as educators, not youth development professionals.

5 The DeWitt Wallace Funds in the mid-1990s supported Chapin Hall and National Collaboration for Youth efforts to document the extent and scope of the field. They and others have made considerable progress.

6 While many groups put youth development principles squarely in the center of their work, Karen Pittman, her colleagues in several settings, the National Network for Youth, the National Collaboration for Youth, and YouthBuild have tirelessly championed these organizing principles.

7 The most recent among the many useful definitional and "scan" type studies are cited in "Youth Development: Issues, Challenges and Directions," a P/PV report (2000), supported in part by EMKF. An upcoming report from the National Academy of Sciences' Board on Children, Youth, and Families synthesizes youth development research and the field itself (Jennifer Gootman, Study Director, www.nationalacademies.org/cbsse/bocyfweb.nsf/web/promoteyouth. The Harvard Family Research Project has been conducting a scan of the "after-school" and "out-of-school time" fields, with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and devoted a recent newsletter to the theme. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently published "Reconnecting youth and community: a youth development approach," (2000) and "Understanding youth development: promoting positive pathways of growth."

8 A recent publication, "After-School Programs to Promote Child and Adolescent Development" (2000) by a committee of the National Research Council (National Academy Press) is an excellent review of developmental considerations.

9 We heard plenty of this rhetoric at the White House Conference on Teenagers and at another meeting of federal agencies concerned with youth development. The dearth of references to hard policy choices at these events was striking. Similarly, both the George W. Bush and Al Gore position papers said little about youth development policies, especially policies supporting out-of-school youth.

10 Theda Skocpol's paper "Targeting Within Universalism" is a wonderful overview of such issues. She notes that Social Security's success as a policy hinged on its redistributing funds in such a quiet, almost invisible way that most people think of Social Security as a universal social insurance program where "you only get what you put in."

11 Newman et al., pp. 84.

12 The 9 hours figure comes from Newman et al. as well as from a Brandeis evaluation of a Ford Foundation supported comprehensive youth development program for youth in grades 9-12, the Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP). In QOP, this is the actual number of hours in programs that made a dramatic difference in post high school outcomes such as college access and crime reduction.

13 Findings in this section are developed from "A Matter of Money: The Cost and Financing of Youth Development" (Newman et al. (2000)). We have refined their model with three assumptions. (1) Newman et al. include *all* children in their calculations. Most youth development however, takes place at the middle and high school level. Our calculations therefore include only children ages 10-19. (2) Looking only at a universal approach to youth development is not practical. For the sake of cost comparison, we also look at youth development programming costs for the highest risk group (10 percent of all youth) and youth who are next at risk for poor adult outcomes (the next 15 percent, or 25 percent of all adolescents). (3) Finally, we shift the number of hours required in a comprehensive youth development program from 14 hours to 9 hours a week *in a community-based setting,* based on the Newman et al. data as well as the Brandeis QOP evaluation by Hahn, who looked at "time in program" in several cities and found that nine hours a week of high quality youth development services can produce dramatic outcomes for participating youth.

14 Ibid. p. 92.

15 United States Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program, Population Division (Washington, D.C. March 2000).

16 Newman et al. (2000), p. 98.